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The Author in her Machilla.

# 1,000 MILES IN A MACHILLA:

Travel and Sport in Nyasaland,  
Angoniland, and Rhodesia, with some  
Account of the Resources of these  
Countries; and Chapters on Sport by  
Colonel Colville, C.B.

BY  
MRS. ARTHUR COLVILLE,  
AUTHOR OF "DUCHESS SARAH."

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## FOREWORD.

THE following pages record our travels off the beaten track in an out-of-way portion of the British Empire, which, on account of its distance from the coast and other drawbacks, is likely to remain little known for some years to come. Information from the latest Parliamentary and other official papers in regard to the products and resources of Nyasaland and Rhodesia has been collected, and may prove useful to prospective settlers and traders. A final chapter on the enlightenment of the African native may not be deemed superfluous in these days of universal education.

As I do not shoot, I am indebted to my husband for the two chapters on sport and description of game. The illustrations are from photographs taken on the spot.

We should both like to take this opportunity of thanking the officials, who showed us invariable kindness during our wanderings, and to express our admiration of their self-denial in devoting energy and talent to the administration of justice amid savage tribes. Their efforts, often involving the sacrifice of health, and sometimes of life, cannot be too highly appreciated by their fellow-countrymen.

OLIVIA COLVILLE.

*May, 1911.*



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[APPENDIX: AUTHOR'S MAP OF ROUTE.]

“And this our life, exempt from public haunt,  
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.”



# A Thousand Miles in a Machilla.

## PART I.

### NYASALAND.

#### CHAPTER I.

CHINDE TO BLANTYRE—MY FIRST MACHILLA—ON  
THE ZAMBESI—SETTLING THE LINE OF ROUTE.

WE landed at Chinde, the Portuguese port at the mouth of the Zambesi river, on Sunday, the 16th August 1908, our destination being Nyasaland, and the object the shooting of kudu and other large antelope obtainable in that part of Africa.

We had the choice of two routes to Chinde—the one by the east coast of Africa, *via* Aden and Mombasa, the other by the west coast, *via* the Cape. As the heat in the Red Sea is very great in July, and after leaving Aden we were certain to steam into the teeth of the monsoon; it was a bad time of year for the eastern route, and would have meant a rough and disagreeable passage as far as Zanzibar. We therefore chose the west, where Atlantic breezes keep the ship fairly cool even on the Equator; the east coast route is, however,

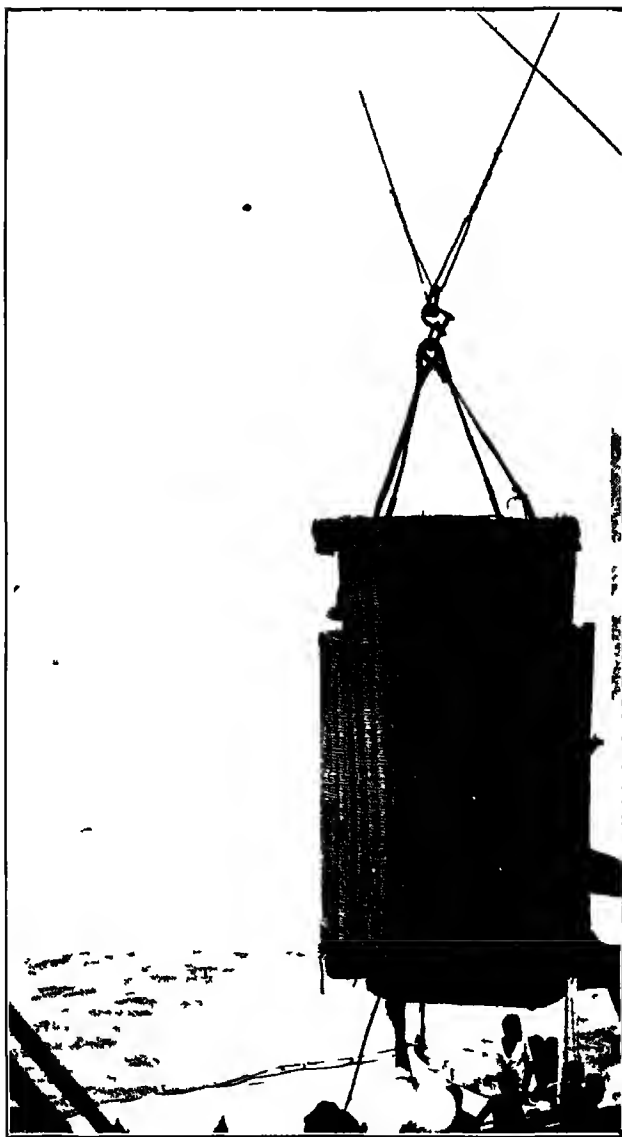
## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

more interesting, but in point of time there is not much difference.

The voyage to the Cape is at all times a monotonous one, and ours was no exception to the rule; but after Capetown, our calls at the various coast towns—Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban, Lorenzo Marques, and Beira, enabled us to see these interesting places. At Durban we left the Castle Liner and transferred ourselves to the German boat of the Deutsch Oest Afric Line, the only passenger service at that time along the coast. It was from this vessel, the *Herzog*, that we disembarked at Chinde.

We anchored about twenty miles from the shore, the water being too shallow to admit of an ocean-going steamer coming any closer. Passengers and baggage are landed in powerful tugs belonging to the Deutsch Oest Afric Line, as only vessels of very light draught can get over the bar. We were fortunate in having a fine day, and except for the ocean swell the sea was fairly smooth; in bad weather a heavy sea is often met with on this part of the coast.

The tug came alongside almost immediately after we had anchored; the embarking passengers were first slung on board in a basket, and their luggage in large nets. Next came the turn of the disembarking passengers, and it was not without fear and trepidation that we saw all our worldly goods, including the precious rifles, first whisked high in the air and then bumped on to the deck of the tug. There had been some fun previously over the



Basket for landing Passengers at Chinde.

[See p. 2.





## Chinde to Blantyre

adventures likely to be met with during transit in the basket; in rough weather it has been known to be bumped into the funnel instead of on to the deck! However, nothing untoward happened, and after wishing "good-bye" to the captain and officers of the ship we stepped into the basket, and next minute found ourselves in mid-air, descending on to the tug's deck.

The tide was falling fast, and as time was pressing it was fortunate that only one passenger besides ourselves was landing. The bar can only be crossed an hour or two either before or after high water. Breakers were on either side of us, while the wrecks lying on the sandbanks testified to the perils of the coast.

To reach Nyasaland from this point one must ascend the Zambesi and Shire rivers to Port Herald, in British territory, and from thence a short line of rail runs to Blantyre, the commercial capital of the country.

After crossing the bar we steamed up the Chinde river, one of the many outlets of the Zambesi, the surf roaring and dashing itself against the shallow strand on the one side, while on the other shore was a tropical forest almost touching the water's edge. The tug dropped anchor opposite the British concession at Chinde about 9 A.M., and an African Lakes Co.'s boat, with the local manager, came to row us with our luggage to the shore, some fifty yards away.

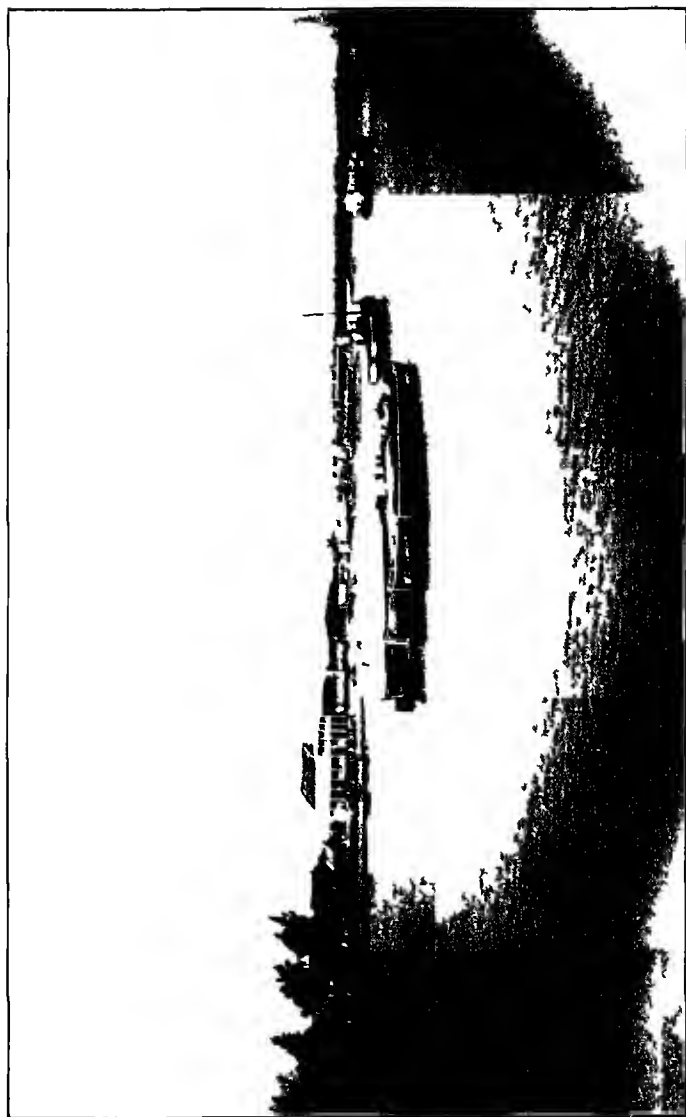
The little town, with its red roofs and the shipping in the harbour, looked quite pretty in the

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

morning sunlight; besides one or two tugs, there was a small ocean-going steamer and several stern-wheelers for use on the river.

The settlement is on the right bank, and built more or less on a sandspit; the left bank is marshy, overgrown with reeds, and is a veritable hot-bed of mosquitoes; in strong north winds they are blown over the river in myriads. The British concession is railed off from the Portuguese part of the town, and here all goods for Nyasaland are landed without having to pay duty to the Portuguese authorities. Sentries are posted all round, and it is impossible to leave the British portion with even a small parcel under the arm without being challenged. The Portuguese town is neat and well kept, and as the Government insists on the galvanized houses being painted green and the roofs red, the place has a more cheerful appearance than is often the case in our small Colonial towns.

It was at Chinde we heard the word "machilla" for the first time, and the word was as strange to our ears as the thing to our eyes. It consists of a hammock covered with a canopy, which is swung either on one long pole or on two parallel poles, and is carried by four men on their shoulders; single-pole machillas are light and usually used for short distances, but double-poled machillas are better and safer for long distances, as there is much less risk of a fall. Machilla travelling is a decidedly lazy means of progression, but is well suited to the climate, and has been universally adopted wherever transport animals are impossible on account of "fly."



Chinde.



## Chinde to Blantyre

My first experience of a machilla was in one kindly lent me by Mr. Stanley Fletcher, the British Vice-Consul, the afternoon of our arrival. His men were fine-looking blacks, wearing khaki loin cloths known as "dotees," broad leather belts and brass buckles. Each man had a black fez on his head, and their general appearance was smart and attractive. They carried me very smoothly, with a short, quick step or shuffle, which does not shake in the least. These town machillas are so arranged that the passenger can sit up, which is very convenient for short journeys, though the recumbent position is less tiring on a long expedition.

We remained one night at Chinde in a comfortable, two-storied bungalow belonging to the African Lakes Company, and were agreeably surprised to find that there were hardly any mosquitoes. Instead of being kept awake by their horrible hum, we were lulled to sleep by the ceaseless thunder of the surf as it broke upon the shore.

Next morning we were taken to see the Company's stern-wheeler *Empress*, on which we were to travel up the Zambesi. An English engineer was in charge of the boat, which was navigated, under his orders, by a native "reis" and crew. There were also three black stewards on board, neatly dressed in white with red sashes; they looked after us very well.

We embarked the same afternoon and found three other passengers: a sportsman from South Africa, an official of the African Lakes Company, and a young Portuguese telegraphist travelling to

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

his station on the Zambesi. We started about 5 P.M., but only steamed as far as the wooding station on the opposite bank to take in wood, the only fuel used, and here we anchored for the night. We dined on board and found the food simple, well cooked, and well served. Our cabin was clean and comfortable, everything nicely arranged, and the ship regulated on the same lines as the stern-wheelers on the White Nile. In fact, in only one respect did we find the Zambesi steamer compare unfavourably with the Nile steamer, and that was as regards the position of the berths, which were one above the other, and consequently rather stuffy. Excellent mosquito curtains were provided, but the bunks were narrow, so that it was difficult in one's sleep to avoid lying against the curtain and thus offering a field for the attentions of the mosquitoes, which were pretty prevalent in the early mornings and had an unpleasant trick of getting in between the partition and the curtain.

Wakefulness at night is always trying, especially when there is hardly room to turn. Mosquito curtains prevent a candle being lighted, and the insects themselves frustrate the desire to get up and walk about.

There is this to be said in favour of the Zambesi mosquitoes during the month of August: they are late risers, so that we were not troubled with their attentions at dinner, and were able to sit on deck afterwards.

The early morning of Tuesday was quite cool, and there was a mist on the river. We started as

## Chinde to Blantyre

soon as it was light enough for navigation and steamed up the Chinde river, at this point a quarter of a mile broad, with high reed-grown banks, over which we could see nothing of the surrounding country.

About 9 A.M. we entered the Zambesi proper, where the scenery changed for the better; there was little cultivation, but here and there we passed clumps of bananas against a background of dark forest; no animal life was to be seen at first. All rivers have their characteristics. The Zambesi is beautiful and interesting in its way, and reminded us of the rivers in the Punjaub. The current was fairly strong, the water low, and sandbanks everywhere, making navigation difficult. Our "reis" steered by the appearance of the water, and when in doubt kept the crew sounding with long poles provided for the purpose; occasionally a bank was struck, and then all hands poled vigorously to shove us off again.

After weeks of preparation before leaving home, procuring outfit and stores, and subsequently the continual movement of an ocean-going steamer, the rest and peace of the river was delightful.

There was plenty of life: natives fishing or dodging about in their dug-out canoes; small barges with thatched roofs over them dropping down stream; an occasional sternwheeler, with the usual lighters alongside, laden with cotton, rice, sugar, and other merchandise. We saw a Portuguese gunboat, also a number of birds and numerous crocodiles lying on the sandbanks. A—— shot one,



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

to the great delight of the boys, who scrambled out and dragged it on board. After carefully skinning the reptile, they proceeded to cut it up, cook, and eat it; it contained a number of eggs, which they no doubt also ate; the flesh of a crocodile is very white, and considered by African natives a great delicacy. The usual method of making a fire on board a native boat is to place a small brazier on a few stones or bricks over a box of sand.

On the freight barges lashed to either side of our steamer a number of native passengers travelled; they were for the most part dressed in European clothes, and were returning to their homes from the Transvaal mines. It was interesting to watch their manner of life—the cooking, washing, and sorting of clothes, etc.; the majority owned common tin boxes, yellow, red, or blue, in which their worldly goods were locked up. One of these boxes is the first thing a native employed at the mines purchases with his wages; he then fills it as occasion offers with the commonest of cotton shirts and shoddy clothing, which it is to be hoped he discards in his home, as it is entirely unsuited to the climate and life. The packing and unpacking of these precious boxes appeared to be a great delight, as also the exhibition of their contents to the admiring gaze of friends. They usually sat about in groups; sometimes one among them would spell out of a book, and all seemed much interested in what was read.

Recruiting for the mines in this district has of late been abandoned, it having been found that the inhabitants of the low country bordering the

## Chinde to Blantyre

Zambesi are unsuited to the higher altitudes and colder climates of the Transvaal.

Occasionally we put into the bank in order to drop a mail-bag or pick up a passenger—at one place to take in a consignment of potatoes—and when the steamer again got under way there was great poling and shoving off. The weather was ideal, but at certain times of the year violent storms are not infrequent, and are sometimes so terrific that barges have to be cast off, and have been known to founder with all their contents.

Our rate of progress was about eight miles an hour; the first day by sunset, when we tied up for the night, we had covered between seventy and eighty miles. The only points of interest along the river were several sugar factories and a Portuguese Jesuit Mission, where Mrs. Livingstone lies buried.

The mornings were foggy, which delayed the steamer's start and caused us some anxiety as to whether we should catch Saturday's train, for there are only two trains a week to Blantyre, and it would have been most inconvenient to have been kept at Port Herald.

About 11 A.M. the third day after leaving Chinde we reached the junction of the Shire and Zambesi rivers, entering the former. After this our surroundings changed entirely. We found the Shire not more than a quarter of a mile broad, with high reed-grown banks, hardly any current, and but little water. At first the scenery was pretty enough; for although the country to our left was flat and uninteresting, to our right there was a range of well-

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

wooded hills, along the foot of which the river wound, bending hither and thither.

That afternoon we reached Villa Bocage and landed our Portuguese fellow-traveller, with whom we had been unable to converse, as he could speak neither English nor French, and we could not speak Portuguese; he was very young and had courteous manners. One felt sorry for him, as Villa Bocage, in addition to being a lonely place, is from all accounts one of the hottest spots on this earth. We remained here an hour while the mail-bags were transferred to a large dug-out with sixteen native rowers, which started off at once for Port Herald. When we got under way, in swinging round a sharp bend—the current in this place being strong—the sternwheeler ran into the mail-boat and cut a hole in her prow, much to the concern and indignation of the crew. The damage, however, was only slight, and presently, when we were hung up on a sandbank, the dug-out passed us going at a rapid rate.

Beyond the station the river narrowed, the water became very low and the country uninteresting: we made little progress, and finally tied up to the bank at sunset, where we heard the mosquitoes sing merrily the whole night through. Friday morning we continued steaming up the river until 8.30 A.M., when the captain informed us he could go no further. We were now afraid of being kept waiting, but within a few minutes of stopping we saw the houseboats that had been ordered paddling down to meet us, and into one of these A—— and I

## Chinde to Blantyre

quickly shifted with our baggage, and off we started again. These houseboats are just ordinary barges, in the middle of which a cabin about six feet high has been built with a straw or matchboard roof and sides and a door at each end. Inside there is room for a couple of beds, camp-chairs, table, and provision box; the baggage is stowed under the deck. A crew of eight men pole the boat along at a good pace, singing most of the time a song with pretty rhythm and refrain; it was a well-known boating-song of these parts, but new to us, and more musical than the boat-songs sung by natives on the White Nile.

We travelled for seven hours in this fashion without stopping. The air was not unduly hot, and it was pleasant enough, though we should have been glad of a better luncheon, the provisions we found on board being somewhat scanty. The scene was ever-changing—reed-covered banks, natives bathing in the river, an occasional village, and fish drying in the sun.

About five o'clock we pulled up alongside one of these villages to get some dinner and give the men a rest, upon which we joined forces with another houseboat belonging to the official of the African Lakes Company, whose servant proved a very fair cook. We were luckily able to buy poultry and eggs, so did not fare badly.

At 6.30 P.M. we started off again, and then our troubles commenced. A terrible smell rose from the stagnant mud of the river, and we had to shut both doors to keep out the foul air and the mos-

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

quitoes, the result being that the atmosphere in the cabin became horribly hot, damp, and stuffy. The night was very dark, and as the crew could not see where they were going they kept banging the barge up against the banks and switching through the reeds, making sleep practically impossible; for if one did drop off for a minute, a sudden jerk woke one up. Reading was out of the question, the only light an indifferent candle in a swinging lantern, so that all we could do was to lie still and wonder what would happen next. For all we knew, the barge might overturn in one of these bumps, and where should we be, shut up in that dark wooden box? Altogether it was one of the most disagreeable experiences we ever had, and we were indeed thankful when we reached Port Herald about 2 A.M. and were at last able to get some sleep, though still we dared not open the cabin doors, and were just as hot as before.

We left the houseboat about 6.30 A.M. and walked to the railway station, being attacked by myriads of mosquitoes en route; these pests were far worse here than on the Zambesi.

The train started at 7 A.M., following the course of the Shire as far as Chiromo, the headquarters of the district, a neat, well laid-out station facing the celebrated elephant marsh, and consequently a veritable hotbed of mosquitoes.

An excellent breakfast and luncheon were served on the train. The change of climate freshened us up, and altogether we made a very pleasant journey, greatly enjoying the beautiful



Self in Mr. Stanley Fletcher's Machilla at Chunde.



## Chinde to Blantyre

scenery of the Shire Highlands through which we passed.

After leaving Chiromo, the line mounted gradually until we reached the watershed about five o'clock at an altitude of four thousand feet. The railway workshops are here, and we heard that a sanatorium was also to be built. The line was still owned by a private company, and had not then been taken over by the Government. A short run of about half-an-hour down hill brought us to Blantyre about 5.30 P.M.

We were met on arrival by a representative of the African Lakes Company and taken to the Company's private hotel in "rickshaws" along a road bordered by sisal hemp, handsome plants, whose tall white flowers resemble those of the aloe. We were glad of a rest and change of clothes, our previous night having been such a disturbed one.

From the balconies in front of our rooms we obtained a good view of Blantyre, a pleasant spot surrounded by hills and forests; its principal feature is the handsome Presbyterian mission church, designed by the Rev. Clement Scott and opened in 1891.<sup>1</sup>

The climate ought to be a healthy one, the altitude being about four thousand feet; but for some reason or other the residents do not speak too well of it, and the place is not entirely free from mosquitoes. The station is divided into two parts, the Government quarter and the Mandala or African

<sup>1</sup> See p. 291 for further information.



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Lakes settlement, in which the Company's offices, stores, and the residences of their staff are situated—a very convenient arrangement. "Mandala" was the first native word that struck me on landing at Chinde; I inquired its meaning, and was informed that it meant spectacles, and was the nickname given by the natives to one of the first traders of the Company, who always wore glasses. From the individual, the nickname spread to the Company, so that it is now known as the Mandala Company throughout Nyasaland and North-East Rhodesia.

The following day being Sunday we were unable to do any business, but we had the pleasure of lunching with the Resident and dining with the Manager of the African Lakes Company, the Honourable A. Kidney, member of the Legislative Council of Nyasaland, who gave us much valuable information as regards the country.

Early Monday morning we went to the Company's store to complete the preparations for our shooting expedition.

In coming to a decision about our future plans we had to take into consideration that the rainy season in Nyasaland commences early in November, and that with its advent we should be obliged to leave the country, as travelling becomes difficult and the climate unhealthy.

Two routes were open to us: to go back the way we had come, or make a round through North-East Rhodesia and return to the coast by the railway from Broken Hill. As travellers a march through North-East Rhodesia offered us great attractions, so

## Chinde to Blantyre

that it was decided upon, even though the information we had received at Chinde had been rather contradictory. On the one hand we had been told by a good authority that crossing the Luangwa Valley would be a very disagreeable experience; that we should have transport difficulties, and the regulations with regard to sleeping sickness might also inconvenience us. On the other hand, a North-East Rhodesian official, who had just arrived with his sister from the Serenje district, assured us that there was nothing in these objections, that the Luangwa Valley was a veritable sportsman's paradise, that we could take a look at Lake Bangwelo, and that as the early rains in North-East Rhodesia would not be excessive, we need not reach Broken Hill before the middle of December.

The first question we had to discuss with Mr. Kidney was that of ways and means, and on this point he soon set our minds at rest; he told us the official rates of porters' wages, explained the payments we should have to make on account of "posho," as the ration money is called, and fixed the amounts we were to pay in wages monthly. Everything was perfectly satisfactory. As regards difficulties, he was equally reassuring, and promised us every assistance from the Company's branches at Fort Jameson and Broken Hill.

We proposed, therefore, to travel through Nyasaland to Fort Jameson, shooting as we went; to reach Fort Jameson early in October, and occupy the remainder of our time in North-East Rhodesia.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Let me say at once that coming to this decision was a great mistake from a shooting, as apart from a traveller's point of view. The shooting in Nyasaland is good of its kind, judging from what we saw of it, and a three months' sojourn in the country would probably have repaid us. Six weeks was hardly sufficient time, however, to do it justice, and as we found subsequently that our stay in North-East Rhodesia was also too short; from a sporting point of view, we rather fell between two stools. In the light of after events it would have been far better to have confined our shooting to Nyasaland, and to have postponed our proposed trip to Lake Bangwelo to another season.

## CHAPTER II.

### WE STAY AT BLANTYRE—OUR MACHILLA TEAMS, PORTERS, AND SERVANTS.

PLANS having been disposed of, the next business was to complete our preparations for the road and engage servants and porters. The great bulk of our food supplies had been sent out from England and were now awaiting us at Zomba, but we had arranged to purchase a certain amount locally, and we had also to buy cooking utensils. Having ascertained before leaving England that the Company could supply us with tents, we were saved the trouble of sending out these bulky articles. Two very suitable ones were offered us, one of which we hired, and the other, a new one, we purchased, as also sundry articles of camp kit. The Company undertook to repurchase these articles at the end of our journey at a valuation, and I may mention here that we were entirely satisfied with the price we received for them at Broken Hill.

Two strongly-built machillas were also provided for us on hire, and these answered their purpose admirably and stood the wear and tear of the long journey wonderfully well. The Company had

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

machilla teams and porters ready for us ; these men were to go as far as Fort Jameson, where they were to be given the option of either returning home or accompanying us to the end of our journey, but the servants were engaged to go to Broken Hill.

John, a Blantyre boy who spoke English well, was recommended for the post of headman ; he was of the Yao tribe, a fine race tracing its descent from the Zulus ; his certificates were good, and showed he had been employed in various parts of the country, including North-East Rhodesia, also on the railway. He conducted us safely over a thousand miles, and besides doing his work well was a pleasant fellow to deal with, a bit of a sportsman and a bit of a wag.

A good headman is most essential ; the comfort of his master and the well-being of the caravan absolutely depend on the manner in which he performs his many and various duties. First of all he is the interpreter, so must be a linguist. Swahili and the so-called "kitchen kaffir" of South Africa are not understood in Nyasaland ; Chinyanja is the language of this country and is also understood in North-East Rhodesia, but the Angonies, the Achepeta, the Wawembe, and Alala tribes have different dialects, and with all these John coped tolerably well.

In addition, he was responsible for the whole of the executive work of the caravan ; he had to get the porters up in the early morning, see to the striking of the tents, the packing of the baggage,

## We Stay at Blantyre

and the arrangement of the loads. On the line of march he saw that the men maintained a reasonable pace, that they did not straggle nor dump their loads in villages to enjoy a chat, nor under a tree while stealing a nap—failings to which porters are addicted.

Arrived at the new camp, the headman has to superintend the repitching of the tents, the clearing of the ground, and the general arrangements of the camp, and when that is over to settle the supply of water and fuel, duties that as a rule cause more friction than all the others put together. At night it is his business to stop undue chattering and noise, and when there are sentries, see that they do not go to sleep, but keep the fires alight in case wild beasts are about. He is in constant touch with the men, but as he has no real authority beyond that which his personality gives him, he has to keep them in a good temper and get the work done as best he can; in fact, his position is frequently by no means a bed of roses, and the excellent manner in which the majority of those who have risen to the position of headmen do their work speaks well for their ability as a class. Travellers of experience thoroughly understand a headman's duties; at the same time, few care to be bothered with the routine work of their caravans, so when a headman is paid to do the work the less he is interfered with the better for all concerned, provided all goes smoothly.

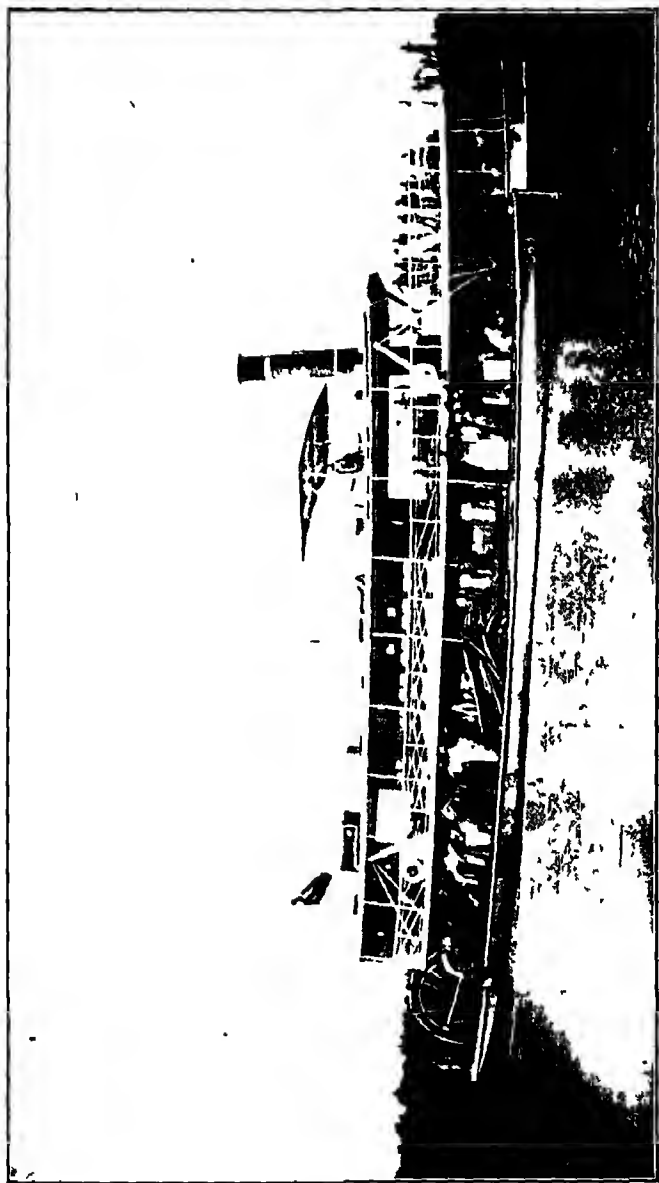
For cook we engaged a man named Moffat, an Anatonga, who had been educated at the Blantyre

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Mission. He was a first-rate servant, a good cook, and an excellent bread maker, one of the most important qualifications of a travelling cook. He made his own yeast from dried hops, and baked the bread between two enamelled pie-dishes, with fire above and below. A quick walker, he was always well in front of the caravan, wearing a picturesque costume consisting of an indigo blue dotee or loin cloth, rather long, a white jersey, and a reddish brown felt hat, which he wore at the back of his head. He spoke very fair English and was a friend of John's, with whom he had previously served in North-East Rhodesia.

As a personal servant we took Edward, a negro who travelled up from Chinde with one of our fellow-passengers. He was a big, clumsy fellow, who meant well and could cook a little, but had not sufficient training to be a good personal servant. He could say "Yes, Master," very nicely, and would shed floods of tears and express the deepest contrition if reproved, but of his duties he knew very little, and was, in addition, very soft; many good points of his native character had, as is sometimes the case, been obscured by his contact with civilization.

As cook's mate we engaged a lad, who only went with us as far as Manga. Why he departed I do not know—probably "Cooky" disapproved of him. A porter whom we christened "Breeches," from the fact that his principal garment was a smartly-cut pair of "Bedford cords," took his place—an excellent fellow, who followed us to Broken



Sternwheeler *Empress* on the Zambesi.

[See p. 5.]





## We Stay at Blantyre

Hill; he could not say "Breeches," so always spoke of himself as "Itches." He was fond of giving orders in a loud tone of voice, but I think everybody liked him.

Making up the baggage into loads is of course the headman's business, but it is just as well to supervise the arrangement whenever a fresh start is being made. The headman naturally wishes to have a large number of porters, and in order to induce one to engage them he will make up as many loads as he thinks will pass, so that if one is not careful some of them will be too light; a good plan is to carry a spring-balance, to prevent any disputes as to weight. The official porter's load is sixty pounds; good men, thoroughly accustomed to the work, will often carry seventy or even eighty pounds without a murmur, but untrained men cannot be expected to carry more than about fifty or fifty-five pounds.

Loads should be small and compact; bulky articles are always unpopular, and should be avoided as much as possible. Tents and bedding bundles come under this category, but are of course unavoidable. "Chop" boxes, about fifty-five pounds, make ideal loads, and there is always competition to get hold of them. Anything decidedly over sixty pounds is strung on a pole and given to two men to carry; we had two or three of these double loads—our tin bath filled with all sorts of odds and ends, and the ammunition box. So far as I can recollect the baggage was made up into thirty loads, much as follows :—

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

	Loads.		Loads.
Tents - - -	- 5	Whisky and Wine -	2
Bedding Bundle -	- 1	Kitchen Utensils -	1
Camp Beds, etc.	- 2	Ammunition - -	2
Tin Mule Trunks	- 2	Bath - - -	2
Store Boxes -	- 6	Hospital Box -	1
Gun Cases - -	- 2	A——'s Dressing Bag	1
Sundries - -	- 3 loads.		

Many of these were much under weight, a necessary precaution when starting on a shooting trip, as it allows for the carriage of such heads and skins as may be procured, though the daily expenditure of stores, wine, and ammunition will also make room for these extras.

Our six store, or "chop" boxes as they are called, were each made up to carry exactly one week's supply of groceries, such as tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar, rice, macaroni, lard, flour, biscuits, sardines, tinned whitebait, fruit, and vegetables, to last us the six weeks we expected to be on the road to Fort Jameson, another ten boxes being sent there direct by the African Lakes Company, together with the trunk containing our civilized clothes for the remainder of our journey.

When the loads are made up they are distributed to the carriers, who sit round anxiously watching the proceedings and speculating what their fate is to be. The strongest, most willing, and tractable men should always be selected to carry the tents and bedding bundles; it is as well to insist also on their marching at the head of the caravan. How the other loads are allotted does not so much matter, provided the weakest men are given the lightest.

## We Stay at Blantyre

Porters should carry the same thing day by day, as this saves both time and trouble; they then know where to find their loads in the morning, how to tie them up in the most convenient fashion, and where to put them on arrival in camp. Those who carry such things as bedding, beds, tables, chairs, etc., will soon get into the way of helping the servants pack them, and will take quite an interest in their loads, often pointing out anything they think is wrong. The post of kitchen-porter is much sought after, as it carries with it perquisites in kind.

The machilla teams vary in number. A——, whose men had harder work and a heavier load than mine, had sixteen men; I had twelve. A——'s team—Angoulu natives from Portuguese territory—were a very good-tempered set of men, who carried him well and worked hard. They were of fine physique, and each wore a red fez as a distinguishing mark. They were great meat eaters, and, according to the Nyasaland boys, would eat anything; in fact, we fear, in days gone by, their tribe had been addicted to cannibalism.

My machilla boys were Angonies, much smaller men, but very active and full of fun. In order to distinguish them from the porters I gave them red sashes, thereby leading them into much extravagance, for the smart new material made them feel ashamed of the ragged old loin cloths over which the sashes were displayed, so that at the first opportunity they asked for an advance of wages with which to purchase new garments.

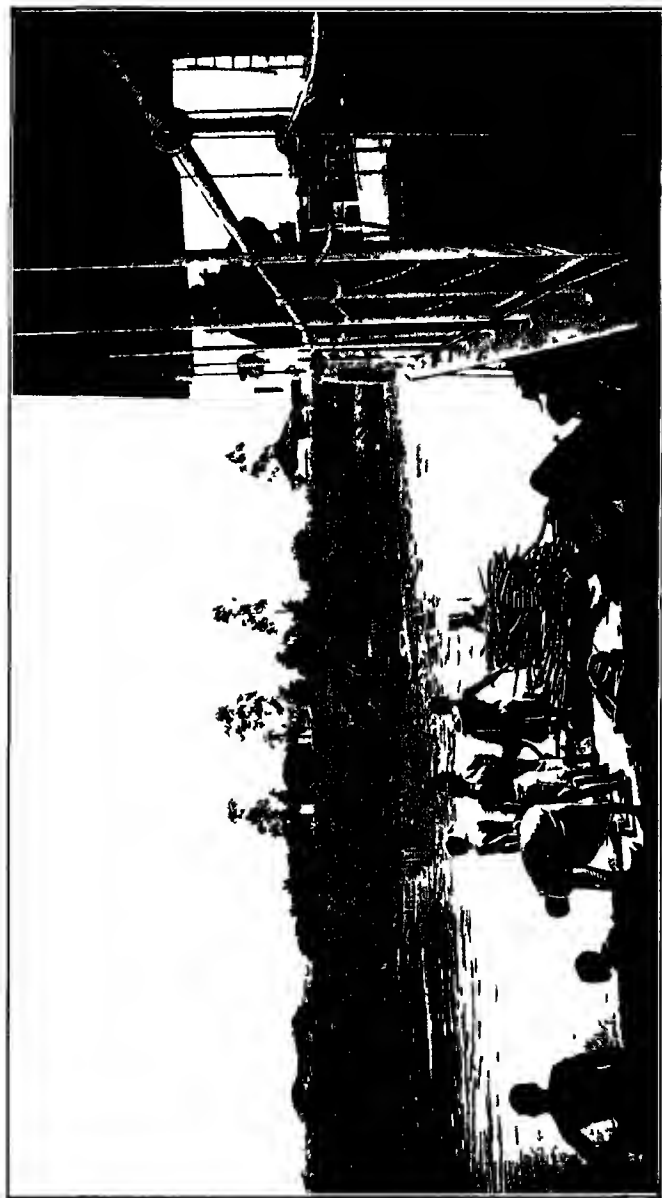
The man in charge of the team is called "the

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

capitao." He takes his turn of duty like the others, but is supposed to keep them in order and arrange everything connected with the work of the machilla. A——'s capitao, a slim, copper-coloured native with refined features, we nicknamed "The Image," from his resemblance to an Egyptian statue. A few days after starting he was down with fever and cold on his chest, and finding that he had no blanket, and nothing but his calico dotee, we lent him a couple of tent bags until he recovered, which he very soon did with the aid of a strong pill, quinine, and mustard plaster. He was rather weedy-looking at first, but regular work and plenty of meat soon made him fill out and become strong again.

My capitao, Antonio by name, was not a success. He was a good-looking black with a fine presence and much swagger, but very lazy and a bit of a scoundrel. The night before we reached Lilongwe he got drunk, and deserted next day. I do not think his departure caused any regret, even to his brother, who was also in my team.

Four men carry the machilla on the road ; extra men are often required when passing through marshes or deep water, and up and down steep banks, and at times we have had practically the whole team at work. The carriers change shoulders pretty frequently ; my Blantyre boys liked doing so all together with a shout, but as this practice invariably resulted in a very unpleasant jolt, I had to break them of it. They were full of swagger, and delighted in showing off on every possible occasion.



From the Stern-wheeler on the Zambesi, showing Lighter attached.

[See p. 8



## We Stay at Blantyre

The men shift two at a time, as a rule every half hour, and those next for duty should always be close in rear of the machilla. Trained teams effect the change without causing any stoppage; the man whose turn has arrived runs on ahead, places whatever he is carrying on the ground, seizes the pole as the machilla passes him, and puts his shoulder under it; as soon as he is in position the other man slips to one side, picks up the bundle from the ground, and drops behind. It is seldom that the man relieved forgets to pick up the load, but it did happen once or twice during our journey.

Travelling in a machilla was very tiring at first on account of the continual swinging and jolting, but when we got accustomed to the movement the sense of fatigue passed off, and we came to look upon it as a convenient if somewhat lazy means of locomotion. Five hours a day, however, a journey of about twenty miles, were quite enough; on a really good road like that from Blantyre to Zomba our pace was five miles an hour, but as a rule four miles was all we could average. We were usually under way soon after daybreak, stopped for breakfast after three and a half hours' travelling, and continued our journey to the next camp. During this portion of the day's march I generally slept, though I was never able to read, as some people manage to do.

To be comfortable one must have plenty of cushions and arrange them carefully in the machilla before starting, otherwise one finds oneself jerked down into a most uncomfortable position. Two



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

cushions at least are wanted under one's head and another under the knees, and if the traveller is short a fourth is necessary to support the feet and keep the body in position.

Our machilla men carried all sorts of odds and ends belonging to their mess: one had a cooking-pot, another a bag of maize, a third a bundle of sleeping-mats in which their spare clothing was rolled up. They also carried our small impedimenta, such as lunch and tea baskets, sun umbrella, camp chairs, etc., so that we could stop at any time on the road for rest or refreshment. One of the men, usually the capitao, carried my dressing-bag, which I liked to have under my eye, as it contained our cash. Most of these natives carried gourds of various sizes which serve for drinking and smoking, while the addition of a few gut-strings turns them into musical instruments.

Good machilla boys have all the characteristics of a team of ponies; they are just as impatient to be off when once in harness, delight in quick movement, and hasten the pace when nearing the journey's end. Lying in a machilla for hours together one gets to know them well and to appreciate their good humour and childlike love of fun. During the halt one of them would come forward to amuse the company. A favourite trick, in imitation of soldiers drilling, was to march up and down, shouting "One t'o, one t'o!" this always produced roars of laughter. They were also fond of comparing the powers of the two teams; a man would first swagger up and down, swinging his

## We Stay at Blantyre

arms as if carrying a machilla, shouting in his own language—"This is Blantyre way!" then he would creep about slowly, all doubled up, and looking the picture of exhaustion, saying, "This Angoulu style!"

On the road one man starts weird cries, quite meaningless words, such as "Ha, ha!" or "Oyé, oyé!" and often a proper name such as "O Mandala!" This cry, repeated and echoed by all the rest, keeps up a certain excitement and breaks the monotony of the road. Occasionally they sing songs. The Angonie tribe have some beautiful chants, former war songs. Some of the tunes have been set to the words of hymns by a missionary.

All were anxious to acquire a little English, and some learnt very quickly. I knew nothing of their language, but managed to pick up a few words, such as "Ku enda" ("go on") and "Linda" ("wait"), and while listening to their talk would sometimes recognize a Swahili or an Arabic word. They always called me "Donna" or "Mama," a form of address which is intended to show great respect.

I have been anticipating somewhat, and must in the next chapter return to our actual doings.

## CHAPTER III.

### MERAMANA AND ZOMBA TO LIWONDE—ON THE ROAD WITH OUR CARAVAN.

OUR preparations completed, the next morning we started for Zomba, the capital of the Protectorate, a journey of about fifty miles, which is usually divided into two stages of twenty-five miles each. A—— travelled in his machilla, while I was provided with a rickshaw for that distance; the road being a good one, my crew of four men ran me along at a good pace and quickly outdistanced him. The scenery was pretty; forest prevailed, with here and there open glades, locally known as “dambos.” We passed a few farms, a fair amount of cultivated land, and an occasional coffee plantation.<sup>1</sup>

About half a dozen miles from Blantyre we were suddenly brought up by a wide gap in the road, where a bridge was in course of construction. I had to get out and cross on foot, the English engineer in charge kindly helping me over with all my impedimenta—kodak, wraps, field-glasses, etc. This chasm would have been dangerous at night, for even in daylight it could not be seen till we stood on the very verge.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 114.

## Meramana and Zomba to Liwonde

I reached Meramana, the usual stopping-place, well ahead of A—, about 1 P.M. We had a letter of introduction to Mr. Livingstone Bruce, a grandson of the famous missionary, so I proceeded to his house, which is charmingly situated, with a delightful view over well-wooded hills.

I was received by a small native boy aged about ten, dressed in white clothes and a red fez. He had all the dignity of a butler, and amused me by the lordly way he signed to my rickshaw men to wait round the corner. A— joined me in about half-an-hour, and Mr. Bruce, who was out when I arrived, returned soon afterwards, and received us most kindly.

In the evening he showed us over his plantation, which had been originally established by Livingstone as a mission station in the 'fifties.

There was a considerable area under cotton, a recently-planted coffee plantation, and quantities of pawpaws and pineapples. Some of the fruit trees planted by the early settlers are still flourishing.

Cotton does well, the raw material being carded by machinery at the station before export *via* the Zambesi; the ripe crop was being gathered at the time of our visit. Coffee was not, however, ready, the shrubs taking three years to mature. Our host hoped it would do well, but there is always the risk of disease.

There was also a prize bull to be admired and a large herd of cattle, which are herded at night in a substantial zareba, strongly palisaded with tree-trunks as a protection against lions, which are not

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

unknown in these parts. I need hardly add that this particular district was free from "fly."

We left Meramana about 8 A.M. next morning, and reached Zomba by 1 P.M.—good going, as the distance is about twenty-five miles; we went direct to the Mandala store, near which place we hoped to camp.

The station of Zomba is delightfully situated on the southern slope of the mountain of that name, at an average altitude of three thousand seven hundred feet, and is divided into a military settlement and civil settlement. In the former, which lies to the westward, are the barracks of the battalion of King's African Rifles and of the detachment of Sikhs quartered in Nyasaland, with parade ground and rifle range, officers' bungalows, and club-house. In the latter are the Government offices, the residences of the officials, and church. Between the two is situated the Government House, with its glorious view—one of the best in Africa—its well-kept grounds, with great clumps of bamboos.

The stores and the shops kept by Indian traders, of whom there are a considerable number, are at a lower level and border the high road.

There is an abundant supply of excellent water, which runs down the mountain side and frequently gives rise to miniature waterfalls and cascades often by the public pathways. The hills are dotted with picturesque bungalows, half-hidden among trees. Vegetation is luxuriant, the gardens' are full of flowers, vegetables, and fruit; mangoes, pawspaws, and pineapples were just ripe.

## Meramana and Zomba to Liwonde

Unfortunately, this otherwise delightful spot is somewhat unhealthy, for though the climate was exquisite and the mosquitoes few at the time of our visit, in the wet season the damp heat was reported to be very trying, and the numberless mosquitoes which then emerge from their hiding-places give rise to a good deal of fever. At that time of the year the flat summit of the mountain is often used as a sanatorium, and is also much visited at week ends; we should have liked to have gone up to the top but could not spare the time.<sup>1</sup>

Zomba has one great drawback from the traveller's point of view; there is no place set aside for him to pitch his camp, as is usually the case in those parts of Africa where there are neither hotels nor rest-houses, and he has consequently to be a burden on one of the residents, whose hospitality, however, has never been known to fail. Probably good sites could be found on the side of the mountain, and the local authorities would do well to appropriate one of these to the use of visitors. We had not been an hour in the place before two officers of the King's African Rifles came to invite us to stay at their comfortable bungalow in the military lines, and very glad we were to accept their kind invitation, for there was no accommodation available in the Mandala house, while the ground about it was much used by Indian traders, and was consequently uninviting as a camping-ground. We spent two pleasant days in Zomba. The universal means of

<sup>1</sup> See p. 122.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

locomotion is the machilla, for which the paths are just sufficiently wide.

So soon as we were settled in our comfortable quarters, we had to take steps to ascertain the most suitable hunting-grounds, and collect the best available information as regards the game of the country generally, kudu and sable antelope being our first consideration.

The Governor, Sir Alfred Sharpe, was away at the time of our arrival in Zomba, but he had sent a letter to meet us at Port Herald, which had already furnished us with valuable data, and we had now the benefit of the advice and experience of the officers of the King's African Rifles, sportsmen all of them, of the officer commanding the Sikhs, and of Mr. Casson, the director of native affairs, a well-known elephant-hunter, who kindly came to see us.

We had still to engage gun-bearers, see to the packing of the loads, and ascertain exactly how many more porters we should require. We engaged two gun-bearers—one who had followed us from Blantyre on the chance of getting the job, and another who was recommended to us locally. The first of these we christened "Yellow Jacket," from the short khaki jacket he wore. Old Saidi, the principal hunter, whose English was limited, always spoke of him as "Bloody Jacket"; he could not manage the word "yellow." "Yellow Jacket" was not at all a bad fellow, but weakly, and nothing of a hunter; we have strong reason to believe that he only joined us in the hope of getting a free trip to Broken Hill, where he expected employment



Line near Port Herald.

[See p. 13.]





## Meramana and Zomba to Liwonde

in the mines. He was discharged at Fort Jameson, as he proved not strong enough for his work. We offered him a job as porter, but this he declined, the position being too derogatory after that of a gun-bearer. I believe he worked his way on, however, with the help of the Labour Department.

The other gun-bearer, an ugly, thick-lipped negro, nicknamed "Black Hat," from the black fez he wore, was strong enough, and also an elephant-hunter—at least, he never ceased talking about his exploits. But as regards other game he was either very little use or too lazy to exert himself greatly. As he was of a sulky disposition, and did not get on with Saidi, we dismissed him at Lilongwe.

Sir Alfred Sharpe returned on the last day of our stay, and as we had the pleasure of seeing him and hearing his views, we left Zomba well equipped as regards information.

Everything being ready, we assembled our caravan early on the morning of the 29th, and started it off about 9 A.M. on its march to the Domasi river, about twelve miles from Zomba, on the Liwonde road. We said "good-bye" to our kind hosts about 3 P.M., feeling that we were now starting in earnest on our travels, and then set off after our caravan.

The road was good and so was our pace, for we were continuously descending at a moderate gradient. The scenery was very pretty: to the eastward the hills rose in tiers one above the other;

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

to the westward the country fell away gradually towards the lake. There was forest everywhere, but frequently through a clearing we had an extensive view over the low country.

We reached our camp by six o'clock, to find that John had arranged it very well and that "Cooky" had provided us with an excellent dinner. Everything went smoothly and we retired to rest, delighted to be in the jungle at last, and confident that we had every prospect of a successful trip.

Next morning we were up and about soon after sunrise, but as every one was strange to their work, and as no system had as yet been established, it was some time before we got under way. A— started ahead about 7 A.M., in the hope of seeing game, but it was eight o'clock when I got off at the head of the caravan, and I travelled sixteen miles in my machilla before rejoining him. The road was downhill the whole way until we reached the Shire valley; the scenery was extremely pretty, and much of the same character as that of the previous day. The temperature rose as we descended, and by the time we reached the foot of the hills it was really hot, which was not surprising, as the altitude had fallen to eighteen hundred feet.

About five miles short of Liwonde we left the high road, and following a native track for a couple of miles or so, reached a village at 11 A.M. and settled ourselves under some fine trees to await the arrival of our baggage; we had taken the precaution

## Meramana and Zomba to Liwonde

of leaving a man at the point where the path branched off.

"Cooky" turned up fairly early, and we had lunch. About 2 P.M. John appeared with some of the porters, and it then transpired that the remainder had missed the turn and had presumably gone on towards Liwonde. A messenger was sent after them, but it was a considerable time before they straggled in, and even then two or three men were missing; one of them was carrying the poles of our tents, and as this individual was discovered chatting in a village, and did not arrive until after dark, he was promptly kicked out of camp, as a punishment to himself and an example to others.

This was just one of the little accidents that will sometimes occur in African travel, and was entirely due to want of method. There was no recognized leader of the caravan, no one in authority told off as rear-guard, a most necessary precaution to prevent straggling and dumping of loads. Lastly, the porters had been allowed to go on one by one so soon as they were ready, instead of starting simultaneously in one body, the result being that they straggled over miles of road and missed the turn when they came to it.

This was the only occasion on which anything of the sort happened. In future no one was allowed to start until all were ready, and as a rule I myself remained to see that this was done. "Cooky" was told to march at the head of the caravan, and instructed to accommodate his pace to that of the

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

porters and see that the men carrying the tents and bedding bundles were immediately behind him. John was ordered to march in rear of everybody, and to keep two or three men with him, whose loads could be added to in the event of a casualty. It is an excellent plan to give the leading porter a flag, as all natives delight in one and think it adds distinction to their caravan; unfortunately, we had forgotten to bring one with us.

From seeing them continually at their work we soon got to know a number of the porters (known locally as "tenga-tenga") well, and quickly recognized the best among them. Maso was most attentive; he was promoted my machilla capitao later on in the Wawembe country, and remained with us to Broken Hill. Gua, a nice-looking little man who made himself very useful, attracted my attention by coming to me and pointing pathetically to his rags, asking me to sell him some calico for a dotee. I gave him a remnant, with which he was delighted; we liked him very much, and were sorry when he left us at Fort Jameson. Mgombo was an excellent worker, who followed us to Broken Hill. Roberti, a good-looking fellow with regular features, hailing from Lake Nyasa, had for his sole garment, on joining the caravan, a chocolate-coloured loin cloth; but as time went on he greatly improved his attire. He was promoted gun-bearer after Fort Jameson, and came with us to Broken Hill. Many of the men had curious names, as "Railway," "Cawnpore," "Steamer," and "England." When we found Chinganje words too

## Meramana and Zomba to Liwonde

troublesome to remember we christened the porters ourselves.

In addition to "Breeches," "Black Hat," and "Yellow Jacket," we had a "Curlypapers," a very cheery lad who used to tie up the wool on the top of his head into wisps with bits of fine brass wire, so that it stood up porcupine fashion all round his forehead. An excellent fellow—we called Elisha from his bald pate—used to look after the fires at night, help with the tent, and wash clothes; being a coast native, he could speak a little Swahili. "Longshanks," so named on account of the length of his limbs, was a fair tracker. As he appeared keen and willing, A—— often took him out shooting, and promoted him to be gun-bearer when "Black Hat" departed at Lilongwe. The first thing he did after his promotion was to ask for an advance of wages with which to buy himself a complete new rig out—a great improvement on the ragged jersey he had hitherto worn. Unfortunately, prosperity did not suit him; he was not nearly so satisfactory as gun-bearer as he had been as porter, so we dismissed him at Fort Jameson.

Porters and machilla boys had a good deal to do after arrival in camp, clearing the ground, pitching the tents, helping the servants arrange the furniture, and fetching wood and water; so that it was some time before they were able to settle down in their own shelters. In the afternoon they had to turn out again and collect a considerable quantity of wood for the camp-fires—one log a man was, I think, the task—and water was always being

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

called for from the kitchen. The men hated water-carrying, which is women's work in the villages, but it had to be done; and as we required a good deal one way and another, poor John was sometimes in difficulties.

However tiring the march had proved, the men very soon got over their fatigue, and representatives of the different messes would often go long distances to buy food. A——'s machilla team, having to go out with him a second time, was spared camp duties as much as possible.

We always closed up the caravan at the breakfast halt, and A—— endeavoured to see the porters pass him at least once a-day, and on two or three occasions, when all was not quite well with the caravan, travelled himself for a time in rear.

We remained two days in our second camp, which was pleasantly situated under some trees not far from the foothills, and a quarter of a mile or so from a village.

There was plenty of game about. Eland were all round the village, and A—— saw them daily, but refrained from shooting, much to the disappointment of the villagers; he, however, shot three pigs. Kudu were reported but not seen. Sable were seen twice, but not a shootable head among them, and a glimpse also was obtained of some hartebeest.

When comparing the amount of game we saw at this camp by the light of after events, I think perhaps we made a mistake in not moving further eastward along the Shire, as one of our advisers

## Meramana and Zomba to Liwonde

had recommended us to do. We were tempted to do so at the time, but as it would have taken us out of our route we thought it best to adhere to the plan decided upon, which was to look for kudu in the neighbourhood of Manga, for sable in the country between Dedza and Lilongwe, and for eland on the Bua River.

During these two days I was well occupied superintending camp arrangements and getting the servants into a regular routine. We had told John always to pitch our tents end to end with a space of about three yards between them; and we joined the flaps together and roofed the extra space with a waterproof sheet or blanket. The front tent was our dining-room and the other our bedroom. I had now to show John and Edward how I liked the boxes and furniture arranged. The two mule trunks were placed one at the head of each bed, the store boxes at the doors of the outer tent, the ammunition and wine cases inside the dining-tent, etc. The same arrangement was daily adhered to.

I had to explain to "Cooky" the system he was to adopt with regard to our meals. He gave no trouble whatever, and very soon got into our ways. As we very rarely breakfasted in camp, our breakfast was usually cold, and generally consisted of hard-boiled eggs, potted meat, or sardines, bread and butter, and cold tea. We were very fortunate in being nearly always able to buy eggs, and were rarely without them. Fresh bread we had daily, for "Cooky" was a capital baker. We always



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

lunched in camp, and were usually given soup, liver, kidney, or minced meat, according to what had been shot, and either preserved fruit or asparagus, or a dish of macaroni or rice. We drank nothing stronger than lime juice in the middle of the day, but always finished up with a cup of black coffee.

The menu for dinner was, as a rule, soup, fresh fish when we could catch it, or tinned whitebait, a delicacy which we allowed ourselves twice a week, and which is to my mind quite the best of tinned foods; roast meat or bird with tinned vegetables, or sweet potatoes when procurable; macaroni or rice with cheese, devilled biscuits, and coffee. We shared an imperial pint of champagne twice a week, and on other nights drank whisky and sparklet, with a glass of Madeira after dinner. Teetotalism after sundown in the tropics may suit some people; we both look upon it, however, as the greatest of errors. We were never short of food except during the last few days of our journey, for if game failed there were always goats and poultry to be bought. A—— occasionally shot a guinea-fowl, francolin, or duck, and these we regarded as a great luxury.

Antelope meat varies very greatly in quality. The smaller beasts, such as oribi, reedbuck, bushbuck, are perhaps the best, but eland meat is quite excellent, and a saddle of hartebeest, kudu, or sable by no means bad. Zebra is sickly, waterbuck tough and rank, and puku the hardest meat we ever ate; it is, however, possible when minced. But all, with the exception of zebra, make good soup: it is



View at Blantyre. Avenue of (Sisal) Hemp in Flower.

[See p. 13.]



## Meramana and Zomba to Liwonde

hardly soup perhaps in the accepted sense of the word, but a concentrated extract of meat produced by boiling large lumps for some hours. When one chunk has had all the good taken out of it, it should be thrown away and a fresh bit put into the pot. The result, mixed with rice or vegetables, is sustaining and easily digested. The tongues of the larger beasts were much appreciated, as also the marrow bones, which are a great delicacy.

We have now for some years carried two "Gem" distillers with us, and never drink any other than distilled water, which we also use as much as possible for cooking. To this practice we attribute in great measure the excellent health we have been fortunate enough to enjoy during our travels.

To work these distillers all that is necessary, in addition to plenty of water, is an ample supply of wood, which, fortunately, is generally obtainable in the wilds. Distillers are better than the best of filters, for the water they provide is perfectly pure. Natives, though they quickly understand their principle, and get quite to like them, taking an interest in seeing them work, cannot resist, when in a hurry, the inclination to supplement the distilled with dirty boiling water from the reservoir at the top: they therefore require constant supervision.

As a greater safeguard the bottles of distilled water were brought to us from time to time, and these we examined very carefully, rejecting the contents without hesitation if there was the least sediment, or if the water was at all coloured. If satisfactory, they were emptied into a jar which was

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

kept locked. The distillers were under the general supervision of the cook, and were set up close to the kitchen fire. They have, of course, a special man to look after them; in this case Laban, who very soon learnt how to work them, and his lapses were not very frequent. He was a very quiet lad, who gave no trouble whatever, and came with us all the way to Broken Hill.

## CHAPTER IV.

### LIWONDE TO FORT MELANGANI—IN THE KUDU HAUNTS —“COOKY’S” EXPLOITS AS A GUIDE.

ON this our fourth morning we got off by 7 A.M., our destination being the village of Manga, a few miles to the north of the Shire river, where we hoped to find kudu.

A—— and I separated on reaching the high road; I went straight to Liwonde Boma with the caravan, whilst he made a round in search of game. He shot a bushbuck and saw a large herd of eland, but did not interfere with them. I reached Liwonde, a clean, well laid-out station, the headquarters of the district, in about an hour-and-a-half, and called on the Resident, Mr. Cardew, who kindly invited me to make use of his house during the heat of the day. Here A—— joined me an hour or so later.

The Resident’s house, standing in well-kept gardens, the verandah covered with masses of purple bougainvillæa all in bloom, was prettily situated on rising ground facing the Shire river, a quarter of a mile or more distant. A mosquito-proof room jutting out in front like a conservatory afforded a refuge from the mosquitoes, which were awful. I have never seen anything to equal them. The ordinary mosquito is fairly regular in his habits.

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and goes to bed at sunrise, but these mosquitoes appeared to be sleepless; they fed on us at all hours, and were as hungry at mid-day as the ordinary insect is at sunset; they did not belong to the reeds and rushes of the river bed, but harboured in the masses of vegetation and grass round the house. Our host appeared not to mind them; long residence at Liwonde<sup>1</sup> had apparently inured him to their attacks.

One of the greatest trials contingent on residence in the tropics is the necessity of sacrificing all that is pleasant to the eye to the stern laws of sanitation. Gardens have their drawbacks as well as their delights; when there is neither vegetation nor water in your immediate neighbourhood you will live amid ugly, hot, uninteresting surroundings certainly, but you will be free from mosquitoes. If you cultivate a garden to enjoy a cool, restful, ever-interesting outlook you will probably pay for it with malaria. Which are you to choose?

Mr. Cardew told us these mosquitoes were not the fever-carrying kind, and that curiously enough in the wet season the others (*Anopheles*) came up from the river in numbers to replace them.

After lunching with Mr. Cardew we started off again at 3 P.M., the sun being certainly very hot. We found the river almost at its lowest, the banks covered with masses of vegetation, and the channel obstructed by the reeds and rushes growing on the river bed. At Liwonde the Shire is normally about three hundred yards broad, and when there is

## Liwonde to Fort Melangani

sufficient water—about nine months in the year—small steamers ply between this place and Lake Nyasa.

We crossed in a deep and heavy barge running on a hawser which did duty for a ferry. The caravan had been sent on ahead to the village of Manga, which is about two miles north of the river, and on arrival we found that our servants, following the custom of the country, had pitched the tents close to the village and a public path, so that next morning we were obliged to shift camp to a quieter and more secluded spot. Manga proved rather hot, but the place was entirely free from mosquitoes, due, I fancy, to the annual burning of the grass, which had only recently taken place.

A— went out that evening to have a look round and shot a zebra, which had a fine skin; a rhinogale (a species of mongoose) of rather a rare genus was also brought in by one of the men. I had the skin carefully preserved, and presented it to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, but unfortunately the skull, which I had given the men to clean, was destroyed by a dog.

That evening our personal servant, Edward, said he was ill, and asked to be allowed to go to the Mission Hospital at Fort Johnston, on the shores of Lake Nyasa, and as he produced a substitute—the brother of the chief at Manga village—we let him go. Luckily for us the substitute proved in every respect a great improvement upon the original; in fact, Franco, as he was called, was the best servant we ever had; no white man could have



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

done better. We never had occasion to find fault with him, and the only time he gave us annoyance was at Fort Jameson, when he wanted to return to his village in place of going on; however, we persuaded him to remain and accompany us to Broken Hill, and I do not think he regretted it. Brought up at the Universities Mission,<sup>1</sup> he spoke very good English, and certainly did great credit to his instructors. On being asked some questions when he first came to us, he amused us by saying, "I am very clever." But he did not mean this as a boast: the English servant's equivalent would have been, "I understand my duties." I believe his position at Manga was that of teacher in the school. Though quite black, his face was not remarkably negroid; he always dressed European fashion, but simply, and the things suited him and did not appear out of place. Franco's great ambition was to possess a strong sewing machine, as he had learned the profession of a tailor.

Next morning A—— went out for a long round in the forest, but except for a single bull eland, saw nothing; the kudu had been recently disturbed and had left their usual haunts. In the afternoon he tried another portion of the forest, and brought home a Lichenstein hartebeest, the first we had seen of that species.

As the kudu had evidently left the neighbourhood of Manga, we moved next morning (3rd September) to Chandawasika, about six miles further on, and pitched our tents on some high

<sup>1</sup> See p. 282.

## Liwonde to Fort Melangani

ground overlooking the village, which was a mile away. The place was hot, but a breeze which blew during the day tempered the heat. The altitude was about two thousand feet. Kudu were reported to be plentiful in the neighbourhood, and that evening A—— saw some cows. Next day he tracked a bull for some distance, and got fairly close to it, but failed to get a shot, principally owing to "Black Hat's" inveterate habit of gesticulating and pointing. That evening the luck turned and he got a fine bull, the first I had seen, and a very handsome beast he was, about five feet in height, with a grey striped coat and spiral horns. Sunday was blank, and, as the beasts appeared to have shifted, we decided to move camp.

A—— started off at dawn next morning, leaving instructions that the caravan was to move to Basili, a distance of not more than six miles or so. As luck would have it he saw a fine bull kudu and knocked him over; the beast got up before he had time to fire a second shot and galloped off. A—— followed the plentiful blood spoor till past noon, when it failed and he never saw him again. What had happened to the kudu we could never make out. The blood spoor was evidence to the fact that the wound had been a serious one, and he could hardly have survived it long; nevertheless, "Black Hat," who was left behind to look for the beast, and promised a liberal reward if he should find him, failed to do so, though he remained away twenty-four hours, and was assisted, according to his story, by a number of men from the village anxious for

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

meat. We imagine the animal must have got into the thick bush that skirts the Shire river and there died.

A—— did not reach our new camp until 3 P.M., somewhat exhausted, as the heat was very great.

One of his machilla boys captured a young golden eagle for me; the bird had a callow beak, but could not fly, and squawked a good deal. I fed him on bits of raw meat, and he soon became quite tame and allowed me to stroke his head. He was most intelligent, and took the deepest interest in watching other large birds flying overhead; and the intense way he had of looking at me was most attractive. I would not allow his wings to be cut, as it would have prevented my liberating him later on if I wished to do so, so he was always tethered by a long strap fastened to one of his legs. At night he roosted on the highest branch he could reach.

My machilla boys brought me some furry rats (*tatera nyarwe*) that they had killed in a burrow near by; they were pretty little creatures, different from any I had ever seen, and I had them carefully skinned and labelled for the Natural History Museum.

As I offered a trifling reward, the men would often bring me small animals. At first they brought them alive; but disliking the necessity of ordering their destruction, I gave instructions that only dead ones were to be shown me; thus later I unfortunately lost a lemur which was captured quite young, and would have made a charming pet.



Colonel Colville's Machilla Team.



## Liwonde to Fort Melangani

Our camp was about a mile beyond Basili, a large village standing in a big clearing, through which a tributary of the Shire runs. We remained here two nights, and as we found it very hot, we had our tent covered with a grass roof. There was not much game in the neighbourhood: A—— saw a herd of Kudu cows, but nothing else except a duiker.

“Posho,” as the ration money is called, was now due, so the men were assembled at dusk to receive it. The rate for porters and machilla boys was six-pence a week; the servants were paid at a higher rate, according to their duties. As I had previously entered all the men's names in my register, there was no difficulty: each man came up in turn, I ticked off his name on the list, John handed him his money, and away he went. It is just as well to establish a system in these matters; for as all black faces are much alike at first, it would not be difficult for the same man to come up twice, if he thought he could do so without being detected.

On the 9th we marched to Rivi Rivi and camped on some high ground overlooking the river, close to a planter's house, which was, however, no longer occupied. There were a number of paw-paws growing round the house, and the native caretaker gave us some of the fruit, which was excellent and just ripe. The tree resembles the castor oil plant somewhat, and the fruit, which is green and shaped like a pear—but about three times its size—grows in bunches. The flesh is yellow and pulpy and good to eat, and credited

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

with being very digestible; the rind is thick, and the interior filled with black seeds from which pepsin is extracted.

The altitude was here about two thousand four hundred feet, a fair rise, but the temperature was still hot. We had, however, plenty of shade. Our tent was pitched under a large Kigelia, or "sausage" tree, to use the name by which it is more generally known. These trees are as high as a good sized oak, with large broad leaves, a purple, trumpet-shaped flower, and sausage-shaped seed pods of a grey colour, as thick as a man's thigh, often two feet in length, and very heavy. We frequently pitched our tent under these trees, for the sake of the shade they afforded, but an eye has to be kept on the "sausages," for they only hang from a very slender stem, and would injure any one upon whom they might fall.

Although the surrounding forest was very dry, the vegetation along the banks of the river was fine with tall timber, including the Baobab (*Adansonia*)—Tebilda tree, as it is called in the Soudan—the hoary old man of the forest, with its giant grey trunk covered with curious excrescences. When devoid of leaves it has a very bare appearance, enhanced by the bright red colour of its flowers, which bloom and fade before the leaves appear. The fruit, something like a large green nut, contains a white pulp of subacid flavour, tartaric acid in fact, and it is full of seeds. Monkeys are said to be very fond of it, and I believe elephants also.

It is difficult to realize at first that September in

## Liwonde to Fort Melangani

Nyasaland is equivalent to February in England. We often wondered what the dried-up stems or withered seed vessels promised. The answer was not found for weeks; then many miles away in another part of the country we recognized an old acquaintance in a spring dress.

The caretaker reported kudu in the neighbourhood, so we remained two nights in the hopes of seeing one; but had no luck, though a servant declared he had seen kudu on the river bank. I went out with A—— the second afternoon; but though we made a good round, saw nothing. We heard a bushbuck barking close to the river, and disturbed some francolin as we went along, but they were out of shot before the rifle could be exchanged for a gun.

On the 11th we made a good march of fourteen miles, mostly uphill. Our tents were pitched in a mealie field not far from the Chirole Mission Station, not a very choice spot, but the best we could find. Among the dried mealie stalks were growing some very tall plants, six feet in height at the least, with bell-like seed vessels something like a Canterbury bell, some of which I gathered and have brought home with me. I subsequently saw this plant in several village gardens, and fancy it is cultivated for a purpose.

The air was a good deal cooler, for we had risen to an altitude of three thousand two hundred feet. That evening A—— brought in some guinea-fowl, which were a desirable addition to the larder.

Next morning, the 12th, knowing that we had a



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considerable climb before we could reach the frontier fort of Melangani, we were up betimes, and every one was on the road by 5.30 A.M., our preparations having been materially assisted by a beautiful moon just off the full, which made everything almost as light as day. In the early dawn we passed through several sleeping villages, offshoots of the Chiole Mission. Against many of the huts great bundles of cotton were leaning, neatly covered, and propped up by the forked sticks in which they are carried, both for protection and support.

The morning was fresh, the air perfect, the forest looked beautiful in the dim morning light, everything glistening with dew. I could not see the sunrise, as we were travelling due west and I had my back to it, but I lay in my machilla and watched the light becoming brighter and brighter; and not knowing what was before me, congratulated myself on the excellent progress we were making. Alas! my rejoicings were premature.

Our route should have taken us to Ncheu Boma, and thence by an excellent high road up the mountain to Fort Melangani. For some unexplained reason there was a disinclination among some of our men to visit Ncheu, and "Cooky" declared that he knew a much better way and a short cut to the high road which would avoid the boma. "Cooky's" vagaries as a guide were still unknown to us, so that we submitted ourselves to his leadership like lambs, and neglected to procure a local guide. About 7.30 we halted for breakfast, and after a short stay on we went

## Liwonde to Fort Melangani

again, on and on, the road getting worse and worse, the caravan straggling more and more, the day getting hotter and hotter. The journey seemed endless; and to add to our misgivings we saw the Dombolo Mission in the distance, but on the wrong side of us. "Cooky" was sent for and questioned, but reassured us by declaring that all was well.

We reached the foot of the mountains at last, and after a short rest were shown a steep track. Could this be the road? Sir Alfred Sharpe had told us he had been up it in his motor car; and as motor cars might possibly do funny things in Nyasaland, up we went. It was steep certainly, and I was carried most of the way looking backwards instead of forwards—the best way of ascending a slope. The view between the trees was very fine, and I was particularly struck by the beautiful, variegated tints of the leaves of the acacia trees, all in their spring foliage, the colours varying from a tender pink to deep crimson, or the hue of a copper beech.

On this occasion we had forgotten to carry our aneroids, but we heard afterwards that the top of the pass leading on to the plateau was about five thousand feet. Once over the summit, we found ourselves on a large open, rolling down, almost treeless. The air was cool and pleasant. In the distance ahead we saw what we believed to be the fort, and on we went rejoicing, to find that what we had taken for the fort was a native kraal, and that the fort itself was still over an hour distant, and behind us to our left. "Cooky" had mistaken the road. We sent for him and reviled him.

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We eventually reached the fort about 1 P.M., having been travelling since dawn, and were most hospitably received by Mr. Hofmeister, of the King's African Rifles, from whom we learned that we had been about ten miles out of our way on an old road, and had not been on the high road at all. Our host was much amused when A—— told "Cooky" to retire to his kitchen with his myrmidons, and not again attempt to be guide, as for that post he was entirely unfitted. It was a considerable time before poor "Cooky" heard the last of this exploit.

## CHAPTER V.

FORT MELANGANI TO DEDZA—THE CALICO MACHILLA—

THE WHITE FATHERS.

We passed a very pleasant evening, and had a comfortable night in a room Mr. Hofmeister kindly placed at our disposal. Next morning A—— went out in search of game but found none, which was perhaps not surprising when we remember that the fort was occupied by an energetic sporting young officer with a fair amount of spare time on his hands. At noon we sent on our caravan, and gave John instructions to encamp half-way on the road to Dedza; we ourselves followed about three o'clock.

Fort Melangani is situated on the plateau which forms the summit of the chain of mountains that separates Nyasaland from Portuguese East Africa. Our road to Dedza ran along the summit of the plateau, passing through a corner of the Portuguese territory. On either side of us were rolling downs, but in the valleys we could everywhere see dwarf acacia trees, a commencement of the everlasting forests clothing the slopes and low country. The plateau has a vegetation of its own; everywhere flowering bulbs were springing up, small irises of different colours, scarlet gladiolas, pale blue flowers, something like verbenas, growing in bunches, pink

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

flowering vetches on stiff stems, yellow dwarf burrage, small white Canterbury bells in bunches, and large scarlet pimpernels. In one place the prevailing colour would be mauve, in another yellow, and in another red.

I was enchanted with a small plant growing close to the ground—some sort of *Combretum*; it had lovely crimson flowers, four leaf-like petals joined together by a seed resembling the flower of *Bougainvillæa*; this plant made blood-red patches on the ground. Another of the same shade of colour, but altogether a different species, had red stems, and in the centre of the crimson petals a green berry turning to black when ripe. This, I believe, was an *Ochna*; we saw it frequently.

John had gone further than we expected, and had pitched our camp a short distance beyond a small Portuguese post, which we reached just about sunset. We turned in early as there was no wood to be had for our camp fire, and the altitude being about five thousand feet, the air felt quite cold to us after the low country.

The following day, the 14th, we marched to Dedza Boma and arrived about 10.30 A.M. The altitude was the same as that of the previous camp, but the mountain, at the foot of which the Boma is situated, runs up another two thousand feet. Mr. Webb, the Resident, was away, but his head man showed us where to pitch our tents. We were given a delightful camping-ground in the gardens attached to his house, under the shade of some large trees with springy turf all around us. The



Zomba Mountain. Band of African Rifles in foreground.

[See p. 30]



## Fort Melangani to Dedza

strong wind was fresh, however, and we were glad of the shelter of our tent. Mr. Webb returned soon after our arrival, and as it was still cold at night, most kindly offered us a room in his house, which we accepted with pleasure.

Sir Alfred Sharpe had told A—— to be sure and go to the top of Dedza mountain for good bushbuck. He was anxious to go, but as the side of the mountain looked as easy to climb as the side of a house, he did not quite see his way to it. Mr. Webb soon settled that difficulty by explaining to us the uses of the "calico machilla," as it is called; a strip of calico about a yard broad and a dozen or more yards in length loosely tied round the waist. A—— started off soon after lunch with plenty of warm wraps, as the wind was reported to be keen at the top. At the foot of the mountain the calico was put round his body, the ends twisted up like a rope; eight stalwart machilla men took hold of it and walked him steadily up the hill—a matter of some two thousand feet.

A—— told me that under these circumstances walking uphill was much the same as walking on the flat.

At the top there was a beautiful view, and although the wind was bitter to windward of the saddleback which ran along the summit, to leeward the air was perfect. After walking a short distance further A—— was fortunate enough to sight a fine buck, which he shot; the beast carried a good head, and in his long winter coat looked almost black. Coming down the steep hill in the dusk was rather



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

unpleasant, not that it should have been, for the "calico machilla" will hold one back descending as it pulls one up ascending, but A—— had not yet acquired the habit of it on the down grade.

That night we heard the wind howling over the plateau—as it is reported to do the greater part of the year—and felt thankful for the shelter of a house.

In the morning A—— was off before dawn to look for sable, a herd of which was reported just over the Portuguese border, and was away all day, not getting back till after nightfall. Although unlucky as regards sable, he brought back with him a bull eland which he had shot out of a large herd. In the meantime I enjoyed a quiet day at the Boma.

The previous evening at dinner we had been discussing our future plans, and as A—— was lamenting the fact that he was leaving the kudu country with only one specimen, Mr. Webb advised us to go eastward into the low country near the lake shore and put up at Mua Mission, sixteen miles from Dedza, where he was sure we should be cordially welcomed. Kudu were plentiful in the neighbourhood of the mission, at least the White Fathers to whom it belonged complained bitterly of their depredations. We should also have a good view of Lake Nyasa, and it would be a pity, as he said, to leave the country without seeing it.

Next morning, Mr. Webb kindly sent a runner to the Mission with a letter asking the Fathers if they would receive us, and what were the chances of getting kudu. The reply, which arrived early

## Fort Melanganí to Dedza

on the 16th, gave a favourable account of the prospects of sport; and as the Fathers sent us at the same time a very cordial invitation to visit them, we decided to brave the heat and to go. We only proposed remaining a week, at the outside, in the low country; so our loads were considerably lightened, and Mr. Webb kindly allowed us to stack our surplus property in his verandah.

We started the caravan off by midday, and followed ourselves about 2 P.M. The road was bordered on the left by a chain of peaks resembling the Dedza mountain in shape and conformation, their steep sides covered with patches of flat topped mimosa trees. Everywhere else were open rolling downs, with here and there a sugar loaf hill rising high above the general level; the summits were bare, but every dip was filled with variegated acacias, offshoots from the adjacent great forests.

After travelling uphill and down dale for about three hours, we reached the edge of the plateau, and obtained a glorious view over the lake, whose blue waters gleamed in the sunshine as far as the eye could reach. In the foreground was the flat forest-covered low country, and in the distance a shadowy range of blue mountains indicating the far away shore of German territory.

We had now to get out and walk. For the first thousand feet or so the descent was fairly gradual, but it was necessary to scramble down the next two thousand feet as best we could; the track was so rough and water-worn that in places I should have had difficulty in keeping my footing without the

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

"calico machilla" which held me up. We reached the bottom without accident, but by this time it was quite dark, and as the air was hot and oppressive, we were not sorry to get into our machillas again.

After going about a mile along a fairly level road with dense forest on either side, we found John, who had come to meet us with a lantern; and soon afterwards we entered the gates of the Mission Station, and were most kindly welcomed by the Father in charge, who was on the balcony waiting to receive us. A large airy room on the first floor was put at our disposal, and we were given the pleasing intelligence that dinner would be ready in half an hour.

The White Fathers are especially trained for African Mission work at their headquarters in Algeria, where they study agriculture and medicine, in addition to theology. They may be of any nationality, are easily distinguished by their large white felt hats and white washing robes, while beards are *de rigueur*. Only twenty pounds a year apiece are allowed them for personal expenses.

The community, which was established by the late Cardinal Lavigerie, is essentially an agricultural one. A Mission, once in working order, is expected to be self-supporting, so the first thing the Fathers have to do is to lay out plantations and gardens and get the natives to work in them. At first these gardens produce only sufficient to supply the needs of the Mission, but by degrees, as they increase in extent, they become also a source of profit.

The result therefore of the establishment of a White Fathers' Mission in a neighbourhood is the

## Fort Melanganí to Dedza

provision of a constant supply of regular work for the natives, offered to them under the most favourable conditions, as being in the immediate vicinity of their homes.

The Fathers, as employers and directors of labour, soon acquire considerable local influence. Schools are built and the natives persuaded to send their children to them; then comes the Church, and as the religious teaching is very simple and not in the least forced, the natives take to it very readily. So far as our observations went, the system followed appeared to be a thoroughly practical one, and from all we could hear, of far greater benefit to the natives than that sometimes pursued by Protestant missions, in which the "man and brother" idea is often overdone; the result being that the natives are often absurdly pampered and are allowed to grow fat and lazy instead of being taught to work.

When we met on the balcony before going in to dinner we were introduced to the Principal, who was on a visit, and to the two other members of the mission, who were of French nationality; the Father in charge came from Holland. The language spoken was French, but one or two knew a little English. The dinner was simple and well cooked, and served according to the rural fashion of France; the pure red wine, made from grapes grown in the vineyards of their Algerian establishment, was excellent, and to us a great treat.

We found the Fathers amiable, cultivated men of the world, thoroughly acquainted with all questions concerning the African native, and

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

experts on agricultural matters. The evenings we spent in their company were among the pleasantest and most instructive of our African experiences.

The weather was very hot, and we had to be indoors during the middle of the day; but while A—— was out shooting in the mornings and evenings the Fathers showed me round the gardens and plantations. One was in charge of the house-keeping, another of the garden and workshops, and the third of the exchequer.

The Mission is well situated on slightly rising ground, overlooking a stream which affords a plentiful supply of pure water. At the back are the mountains and in front the low flat country, which stretches away to Lake Nyasa, some ten miles distant. The buildings, which were constructed by local natives under the supervision of the Fathers, are built of red brick, with tiled roofs, the grooved tiles resembling those habitually used in the south of France. The mission house faces east and is two-storied, with large airy rooms, having a balcony in front. The living rooms are on the first floor, the class-rooms on the ground floor, and the servants' quarters at the back. The house forms a quadrangle, one side of which is occupied by the church, the other by the workshops; the main building forms the centre.

The inside of the church is simple, with white-washed walls. There are wooden benches for the congregation, and two confessionals screened off with white calico. At 8 A.M. every morning the church bell rings, and the natives in their scanty

## Fort Melangani to Dedza

garments are to be seen mounting the steps most reverently.

The plantations cover a considerable area. There is a banana grove, a coffee plantation with shrubs about three feet high, covered with red berries, almost ripe and ready to be gathered at the time of our visit. There are orange and lemon trees, quantities of pine-apples and pawspaws trees, which here attain the height of a date palm; also rubber trees, but these were still in their infancy. A large acreage was under wheat—a most important crop—as wheat is not generally grown in this part of Africa, and the cost of importation of white flour is considerable. The wheat is pounded by native women in wooden troughs, and afterwards carefully sifted and ground in a hand mill. In the kitchen garden there were all the usual vegetables, and also a large strawberry bed in good bearing.

The first of these mid-African Missions was established in Uganda, and branches now exist in East and in Central Africa, North-East Rhodesia, and Tanganyika. The Mua Mission we visited is affiliated to the Tanganyika and North-East Rhodesian branches.

Sport, unfortunately, failed during the three days we spent at Mua; and though A—— went out morning and evening, he saw no game. The kudu had gone. He found fresh tracks of buffalo in the forest, but they lived in a marsh, which they rarely left except at night, and were unapproachable. Had he been able to wait a week he might very probably have shot one; for, as

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

a matter of fact, it was merely a question of time and patience.

The absence of kudu was easily explained ; they had been in the habit of visiting some fields two or three miles distant from the Mission, but these had been recently harvested, and there was no longer anything to attract them to the neighbourhood. Where had they gone? It was difficult to say. Perhaps to the foothills, where, at this season of the year, it was practically impossible to get near them ; or they might have migrated to native villages on the Lake shore, in search of crops still unharvested.

The Fathers were greatly disappointed at our bad luck. They would have been glad if the buffalo and kudu—which had done much damage to their harvest—could have been reduced in number. They would also have appreciated a little meat as a change from their staple diet of poultry ; for there are neither cattle nor sheep in the district, owing to “fly,” and only a few goats. One of their number was a sportsman, who from time to time would bring in an impala or reedbuck ; but few now remained, and he had not the necessary licence to shoot kudu or buffalo.

We left the Mission on the morning of the 21st, starting off our caravan at 4 A.M., and following ourselves about 6 A.M., so as to be well up the side of the mountain before the sun grew hot enough to be unpleasant. Near the foot we had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Webb, who was on his way to a station on the edge of the Lake, about ten miles



"Cooky."

John.

"First Blood" (Three Pigs).





## Fort Melanganí to Dedza

beyond Mua, and he was kind enough to offer us the use of his house at Dedza as before. He suggested that we should accompany him to the Lake, as kudu were always to be seen in the neighbourhood of the village he was going to. Had our luggage not been already at the top of the mountain I think we might have gone with him.

We breakfasted about 8 A.M. at the four thousand feet level, having previously changed every stitch of clothing; for, though we had been, of course, pulled up by our machilla men, we were just as wet from perspiration as if we had been through a river. The change of temperature was delightful, and the glorious view of the Lake from over the tree tops made us quite loth to move. However, on we went again, reaching Dedza about noon, to find our baggage unpacked and everything ready for us.

Shortly after lunch, a Nyasaland official, acting on the recruiting staff of the Transvaal mines, arrived on his way to Blantyre. He dined with us that evening, and gave us interesting information about the country.

## CHAPTER VI.

### DEDZA TO LILONGWE—DIVIDING THE RATIONS— A HERD OF ELEPHANT HOLD UP THE ROAD.

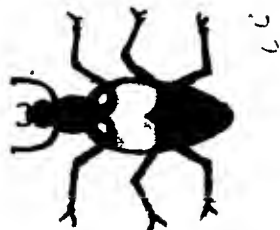
ON arriving at Dedza we had dismissed ten of our porters, northern Angonies, who wished to proceed to their homes, and replaced them by ten local men, who joined us on our return from Mua. Our loads had been reduced by two through the consumption of stores, so that we had now one surplus porter at least, which rather puzzled John, who did not know what to do with him.

We got off about 7 A.M., and, leaving the direct road to Lilongwe, branched off to the right along a track leading into the mountains, our destination being the district between Kalomo and Chongoni mountains, where sable were reported to be fairly plentiful. Our track, which at first skirted the western side of the Dedza mountain, led us through beautiful scenery, a country of rolling downs, dotted here and there with great round boulders covered with grey lichen, perched precariously one above the other.

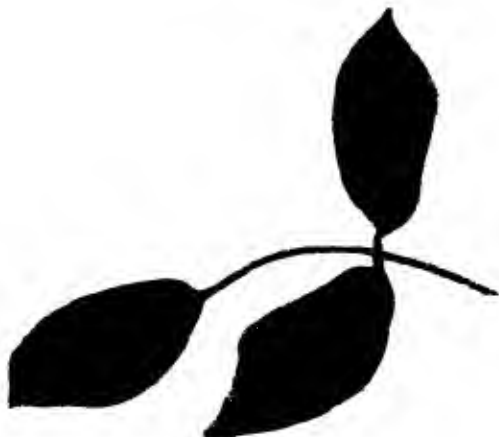
We marched till 11 A.M., the air feeling cool and pleasant, and camped on some high ground, from which we had a magnificent view over the surrounding country.



ACACIA? (Not identified.)  
Spring tint. Angoniland. (P. 67.)



A RHODESIAN  
BEETLE.



ACACIA? (Not identified.)  
Spring tint. Angoniland (P. 67.)



## Dedza to Lilongwe

Towards evening I strolled out of camp, and was much struck with the beauty of the landscape, the delicate tinted acacia trees ranging from tender pink to rich crimson, from pale yellow to deep coppery brown and green, scattered amid the grey rocks. On the far horizon the bold outline of distant mountains veiled in blue haze, in the middle distance flat-topped mimosa trees making a dark note in the landscape, while near at hand the sun-dried grass waving in the breeze made up a never-to-be-forgotten picture, resplendent in the rosy glow of the afternoon sun.

I attempted a sketch, but under difficulties, as I found I had no paint-brush—and must use a feather—and neither cobalt nor gamboge in my paint-box. However, rough though the sketch is, it reminds me of the beauty of the scenery in far-off Angoniland.

Inquiries as regards game disclosed the fact that there was a herd of sable in the neighbourhood whose usual feeding-ground was a dambo two or three miles off. That evening we went after them, and sure enough there they were placidly feeding in their favourite place. Their position necessitated a long stalk, and round we went for two or three miles under cover of the forest. When on a level with the herd, I stopped with the machilla teams, while A—— and old Saidi crept up to the edge of the trees and got within a hundred and fifty yards of them quite unperceived, to find, alas! that there was no old bull among them. They looked so picturesque that A—— sent Saidi back to fetch me, but

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

unfortunately something disturbed them as I was coming up, and all I saw was the end of their white-tipped tails as they galloped away at full speed. I managed, however, to make them out fairly well through glasses when they stopped about a mile off to graze once more. Cow sable are brown, but the old bulls are a beautiful blue-black; and apart from their horns, are easily distinguishable from the young bulls, which resemble the cows in colour.

On our way home we came across some reed-buck, pretty beasts with greyish-yellow coats and horns curving forward; and as we were short of meat, A—— shot three of them, to the great delight of the men. Our teams carried us home "full speed ahead," singing at the top of their voices. It was pitch dark by the time we reached camp, and lanterns had to be fetched to guide us up the steep slope leading to our tents.

We remained stationary the whole of the 21st and 22nd, whilst A—— thoroughly searched the neighbourhood. The country was very fairly open, with nearly as much grass land as forest, and there were plenty of points of vantage from which a telescope could be used, yet nothing was to be seen but a few oribi and reedbuck.

What becomes of the game it is hard to say. One evening an eland was seen, and on another occasion a glimpse of a fine bull sable, but they were both off before A—— could get a shot.

Late on the 22nd the natives reported that the herd of sable was back again in its usual haunts,

## Dedza to Lilongwe

so A—— decided to march next morning to Chongoni mountain, and to take the dambo on his way.

He was off betimes, leaving me to follow with the caravan. He sighted the sable in much the same position as before, but this time the luck was better; a fine bull was feeding with the herd, and shot. I had just arrived with the caravan at the appointed meeting-place when A—— came up much pleased with the result of his stalk, and we had our breakfast while the animal was being brought in.

After breakfast we marched through thick forest along the foot of the Chongoni mountain, and would have liked to have climbed its forest-clothed sides, which rose some two thousand feet above the general level, but time did not permit. The natives told us we should very probably see game along our route; but though a sharp look-out was kept, nothing was sighted.

As was always the case when any large beast was killed, there were great rejoicings in camp that evening. The distribution of the meat generally took place after dark. John took charge of the operation, and acted in addition as head butcher, the gun-bearers and one or more porters specially selected for the job being his assistants. "Cooky" would first secure our portion, usually the kidneys, liver and back, often a piece of leg for soup meat, and in the case of large animals the tongue and marrow bones. If a village chief were present, as sometimes happened, he received a share in return for any information he had given or guides he



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

had supplied. The remainder was divided among the men by messes, A——'s machilla boys having the first call after the gun-bearers, on account of the special work they had had in connection with shooting the game. The distribution of the meat often gave rise to a considerable amount of talk, not to say argument, porter X. thinking that porter Y. had had more than his share. These disputes were rarely referred to us, though occasionally old Saidi, who had seemingly an enormous appetite, considering what a thin little man he was, would dash up, his portion in his hand, and complain bitterly of its size.

The meat ration is always greatly appreciated, and its stoppage is often an effective punishment, though it is difficult to enforce as regards an individual, for no one messed alone. The allotting of the meat places a certain amount of useful power in the hands of the headman, who can, if he distributes it with judgment, pay off old scores against any group of men who have annoyed him by slackness or insubordination. In this respect John was not as severe as other headmen we have had, who used the influence the meat gave them very effectively. It is just as well for all ranks in a caravan to realize the advantage of being in the good graces of the headman.

We struck the Lintipe river on the 24th, and, marching through some very pretty country, followed its course until we passed out of the mountains and entered the level forest-covered district, averaging nearly four thousand feet in





## Dedza to Lilongwe

altitude, which stretches northward right away to the Michinge Hills.

We pitched our camp in the forest on the right bank of the river just beyond the foot-hills. As there was still a quantity of long grass in the neighbourhood, we had to burn a large patch round our tents, and while doing this the men killed three or four *rhinogale*, two of which they brought me. The skin of these animals is so thin, that John despaired of preserving them. However, I encouraged him to try, and he succeeded so well that they are now at the Natural History Museum in South Kensington. John was our head Skinner; he thoroughly understood the business, and skinned or superintended the skinning of all the beasts that A—— shot.

The men consider these *rhinogale* a great delicacy; they pluck off the hair and roast them whole. I imagine that they must taste something like a large rat or a sucking pig.

We remained in this camp the 25th and 26th. A—— saw sable antelope each day, and bagged two fine bulls and a hartebeest. On the 27th we moved a few miles forward to the junction of the Lintipe and Tete rivers, where we got a water-buck and saw others. The natives alleged there were "hippo" in the river, but a long wait one evening failed to reveal any signs of them.

I picked up here a very perfect tortoiseshell, which I have had polished. John declared that carrion birds would attack a tortoise and tear it out of its shell, but my knowledge of natural history

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

is not good enough to know if this is really the case.

On the 29th we marched across to the point where the Diampwe river crosses the Dedza-Lilongwe high road, and found the distance much longer than we had expected. The country was level and fairly open, with large areas of marshy looking grass lands. While at breakfast, we were suddenly told that elephants were in sight, and, running up to the top of a small hill on the side of which we were sitting, we saw a large herd about two miles off walking quietly along, and had a fine view of them through our glasses. There were about fifty in all, mostly cows and calves, with at least two fine old bulls amongst them, one enormous looking beast towering above the others. They were down wind of us, and the way in which every trunk suddenly went up sniffing the air showed us that they were not long in getting notice of our whereabouts; but I suppose the distance that separated us was too great to give cause for alarm, for they continued to move steadily forward without changing their direction. The exaggerated way in which the small calves, running along with their mothers, sniffed the air in imitation of their elders was very quaint. Our men wanted A—— to follow the herd, and were very disappointed at his declining to do so; it was useless, however, for the beasts had got our wind and were on the edge of the Dedza-Lilongwe high road, the boundary of the Reserve, which we were not allowed to enter. We heard later that they remained on the road during



Crossing the Shire River.

[See p. 45]



## Dedza to Lilongwe

a part of the day, and held up the postrunners, who had to make a considerable *détour* to get round them.

Our camp that evening was well situated on high ground overlooking the Diampwe river; here a fair-sized stream, with low marshy banks. There was game about; A—— saw hartebeest and sable; eland were reported, and reed-buck we could see from our tent, so that I think we should have done well to have remained two or three days in the neighbourhood; but push on was the order. The Bua and North-East Rhodesia were attracting us like magnets.

Next morning (September 30th) A—— shot a hartebeest just after leaving camp, and as cutting up the meat delayed us, we did not reach Lilongwe till 1 P.M. We went to the Boma on arrival, and received a most cordial welcome from the Resident, Mr. Gordon, and were delighted to find that he had a large mail awaiting us, the first letters we had received since leaving England.



## CHAPTER VII.

### LILONGWE<sup>1</sup>—JOHN'S UNPLEASANT EXPERIENCE.

LILONGWE is situated on the left bank of the Likumi, a good sized river, and, like all stations we saw in Nyasaland, is neat and clean and well laid out, while round about there are a number of excellent roads, which are a source of great pride to the Resident.

The place, unfortunately, has been built in a hollow, and is consequently very hot. We were there in September, the equivalent of March in England, and the temperature was 75° F. in the shade at 9 A.M. and 85 at 4 P.M. During the wet season mosquitoes swarm, and black-water fever and every other malarial disease is then rife. Why so many stations in the tropics have been established in thoroughly unsanitary positions it is hard to say. We were told that in this case the first official who visited the spot arrived in a very tired condition after a long trek, and seeing a nice shady tree growing near the river-bank, said "This is my house!" and here sure enough the Boma was erected. A mile or so further a charming and perfectly healthy site could have been chosen on the edge of the plateau, with a delightful view over-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 118.

## Lilongwe

looking the river and the forest-covered valley through which it runs. The present Resident has built himself a cottage there, to which he retires whenever his duties permit.

The Resident's house is very comfortable, with wide, shady verandah all round it. On the walls of the living room were a most interesting collection of native weapons and other curios, including the "hippo" spears with ropes attached to them, used by the Lake fishermen, and the short weighted spears with which natives bait their elephant traps.

In addition to his curios, Mr. Gordon had a small menagerie, where were a couple of leopards and a young roan antelope, which followed its keeper about like a dog. I asked him whether he would give my eagle a home, as his temper was getting spoilt by the continual travelling, and this he kindly consented to do. From the intense way in which he looked at me I really think the bird knew that I was leaving him, and regretted my departure.

A room in the house was placed at our disposal—a welcome retreat during the heat of the day; but as there were no arrangements indoors for fixing the mosquito-curtains over our camp beds, our tent was pitched just outside for us to sleep in. In a tent mosquito curtains are tied to tapes sewn into the lining above the bed.

Just after dark, John, while walking in the compound across some rather long grass, was bitten in the ankle by a young puff adder, and very sensibly came at once to tell us of the accident. Mr. Gordon,

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

fortunately, was present, and knew exactly what to do. He scarified the place until the blood came, inserted some permanganate crystals in the wound and bandaged the leg tightly above the knee. John was then given a strong dose of raw whisky and sent off to bed. He slept well, and though his foot was much swollen, was not otherwise greatly the worse next day. Only a short time before I had been walking about on the same ground in shoes, which was an imprudent thing to do. Had I been the victim I should hardly have come off so easily; it was a narrow escape.

During the afternoon, a Portuguese gentleman, who spoke excellent English, arrived, on his way to the District in Mozambique territory, of which he was Resident, so that we passed a delightful evening. Our host's description of the country, its sport and inhabitants, was most entertaining as well as instructive, he being a noted and experienced elephant hunter.

Next morning we were pretty busy. Fourteen of the porters who had come with us from Blantyre, whose homes were in this neighbourhood, had to be paid off, and to replace them we had to take on fourteen new ones who had been recruited for us at the Boma. John's foot was very swollen, and he was not at his best, so that we had ourselves to superintend the making up of the loads, and had also to give out the advance of wages which many of the men required. However, everything was ready by noon, and we started off the caravan to march to a suitable camping-ground about eight miles distant on the

## Lilongwe

road to Kalolo, somewhat to the men's disgust, I fancy, for they had hoped for two or three days' rest in the Boma, or rather in the large native village in the vicinity.

Mr. Gordon most kindly lent us an extra police captao he happened to have available to look after the Lilongwe boys, who in consequence gave less trouble than any men we had with us throughout our journey, and to assist us with the A'chepeta natives, whose capacity for lying, whose laziness and disinclination to assist travellers is proverbial.

After lunch we discussed our plans, and Mr. Gordon kindly sketched out the route which he thought would give us the best chance of obtaining sport. He advised us to march *via* Kalolo to the head waters of the Bua, to follow the course of that river so far as its junction with the Karuzi, and thence *via* Chetunde Hill to the Livelezi and Fort Jameson.

We left the Boma at 4.30 P.M. and reached our camp at 6 P.M. to find everything ready for us. The air on the plateau seemed cool and pleasant after the heat of Lilongwe.

We had arranged to hire a native machilla for John to travel in, but through some mischance he missed it and walked the whole eight miles on his swollen foot without uttering a complaint. The black man is a curious mixture; he will make a lot of fuss over a scratch and ignore a serious wound. In a large caravan casualties are fairly frequent, and the natives, though they have excellent remedies of their own, always look to the white

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

man (or woman) to cure them. I was consequently house-surgeon and physician, and A—— the consulting authority. Fortunately, only simple remedies are as a rule required, and as a doctor is rarely available one has to do one's best with what knowledge and experience one possesses; at the same time, it is surprising how quickly a traveller acquires a practical knowledge of rough-and-ready surgery. Natives have a quaint fashion of stating their ailments. "Hard stomach" was a very usual complaint, for which Epsom salts or a "Cockle" or two was an unfailing remedy; diarrhoea was fairly prevalent, as also dysentery, but these complaints were quickly amenable to chlorodyne and opium pills. Villagers would often come to me for treatment. At Dedza a sick baby suffering from bronchitis was brought in, and on another occasion a boy with a severe attack of malaria. A travelling native attacked with dysentery came to ask for remedies. Sprains, cuts, bruises, and sores were frequent; for these there is nothing to equal strong permanganate of potash in hot water. The cures it will effect are wonderful; it seems to draw out poison and reduce inflammation. A log of wood fell one day on the foot of one of my machilla boys, who came to me crying with the pain; hot fomentations soon put him right, and though he was unable to carry me for a few days, he was quite able to limp along the road the following morning. A man with a nasty punctured wound in his foot was so contented with the treatment that he insisted on coming to show me his foot daily long after it was well,

## Lilongwe

until at last I struck and refused to see him any more. Natives are just like children, and have to be treated the same way. Franco ran a long thorn into his foot, which lamed him for nearly a week. The permanganate poultices that brought it out so pleased him that he used to come and ask me for crystals with which to treat his friends.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### LILONGWE TO FORT JAMESON—OUR DOMESTIC PETS—

#### ACHEPETA GUILF AND STUPIDITY.

ON October 2nd we started early and marched till 10 A.M. The grass on both sides of the road was unburnt, so that we set light to it while waiting for the caravan to come up. It was very dry, and a high wind blowing at the time caused a sea of flame which was carried for miles; in fact, we saw the traces of our fire throughout the following day's march. The grass was too high and thick for shooting purposes, while burning has the effect of scattering the game; so for the first few days at least we were rather in a dilemma. The grass not required for thatching, natives will generally burn when ripe; but chiefs, if they think they can do it with safety, will often retain large areas unburnt, as they know game will collect in it. When a favourable moment arrives parties of natives fire the grass in a large circle so that the flames travel inwards, a ring of smoke and flame is soon started, the unfortunate animals caught inside will rarely face it, and keep closing in to the centre, where they either perish in the flames or by the spears of the natives who follow in after the fire. It is a great mistake to suppose, as many stay-at-home people do, that it



Head of Kudu, shot at Chandawasika.

[See p. 47.]





## Lilongwe to Fort Jameson

is the big game shooter who is responsible for the diminution of African game; natives spare neither age nor sex, and one of these drives will often do more damage than fifty shooters would have done. Some districts are entirely denuded of game, owing to the sale of cheap guns and powder to the natives.<sup>1</sup>

By the time the caravan had arrived the ground was bare, except for here and there some smouldering remains; but overhead occasional branches still burnt—dead wood that had been caught by the fierce flame as it passed among the trees—and these had to be sawn off, when in the neighbourhood of the tents or the men's shelters. In assisting at this work one of my boys damaged himself rather badly, falling from a dead branch, and sprained his ankle.

A young lemur was caught, and I was sorry that in capturing it it was killed. The small hands and feet of a lemur are more human than a monkey's. I had great difficulty in preserving the skin, as there was now a heavy dew at night, which saturated everything. My men also brought me a jumping shrew (*nasilio brachyurus*)—a curious little beast with a pointed snout, and its hind legs longer than the fore legs.

Everything was black, of course, and minute particles of charred grass flew about everywhere.

On October 3rd we made a good march to Kalolo village, rising gradually, so that our aneroids again marked four thousand feet. Game

<sup>1</sup> Of course this is forbidden by the authorities, only native weapons being allowed.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

was reported in the neighbourhood, but as the grass was unburnt, it was impossible to see whether there was any or not.

The chief was a youth, but his mother, by name Casadilla, a tidy-looking woman with a pleasant face, accompanied him, bringing the usual present, which on this occasion included a goat. The goat was sent off to the kitchen, but was not killed, as we happened to have plenty of meat at the time. The next few days he was led along by "Breeches" on a string; but after that he grew so tame that he would trot along with the caravan, and soon became a general pet; his life was therefore spared. He was very fond of running under our machillas for the sake of the shade, and dearly loved resting under the outer flap of the tent. He would pass the time of day with any other goats he happened to meet on the road, but never stopped long, and would dash on at full speed to rejoin the caravan. He slept near the kitchen fire, and "Breeches" was his keeper. The goat became quite a feature of the caravan, and followed us safely to Broken Hill.

A cock also travelled with us. I forget where he originally joined the caravan, but it was quite in the beginning of our trek, and he was either purchased or came as a present from a chief. He happened to survive the first few days, and the servants finding his early morning crow a useful *réveille*, took a fancy to him and spared his life. He travelled on the top of the kitchen porter's load, and knew his place perfectly. His spirits never failed him, even in pouring rain, and under most adverse circum-

## Lilongwe to Fort Jameson

stances his cheerful crow could be heard at intervals during the march. He reached Broken Hill in safety, and joined a company of local fowls. I trust he continues to crow as cheerily as ever.

(4th October.)—We started off next morning under the guidance of a local native, the intention being to make a slight *détour* in search of game. After marching for about two hours A—— noticed, from the position of the sun, that we were going eastward in place of westward, and becoming suspicious, sent for the guide and John. We went on again, but as the interview had not quieted A——'s doubts, we stopped at the first village and sent for the chief. Much parleying ensued, but at last it became sufficiently clear that, in place of going forward, we were marching along an old road that would in time take us back to Dedza Boma, and that there was nothing for it but either to return to Kalolo and lose a whole day, or take a short cut across country—a somewhat risky proceeding, as the sun was growing very hot and water was scarce. We decided on the latter course, however, and, accompanied by two local guides, started off again, A—— checking our course by compass. We dismissed the Kalolo guide with a caution. If ever a man deserved a flogging to brighten his intellect he did, but A——'s invariable rule was never to flog except in cases of assault. How he managed to deceive the Lilongwe capitao, who was supposed to be equal to any amount of Achepeta guile, we were never able to discover.

Our route took us straight across country,

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

along the foothills of the Michingi Mountains, through some very dry forest country, in which a few zebra and hartebeest were running. The sun was growing intensely hot, and there was no sign of water, so that, after two hours' marching, we were very glad to reach a large dambo, in the centre of which was a dry watercourse, and to hear that if we followed it we should find water. Subsequently this proved to be one of the head waters of the Namitate, a tributary of the Bua river. Another half hour or so brought us to a water hole, and orders were at once given to pitch the tents on the edge of the forest.

The tent was scarcely up when a great hue and cry arose amongst the men, and A——, running out to see what was the matter, was told that there was a large python in the water hole. He saw the snake sure enough, and shot it, but it disappeared in the mud. The Angoulu machilla boys, however, who liked snakes, determined to have it, and by persevering and poking about in the mud with long poles, succeeded at last in getting the reptile out, and dragged it up to our tent with a rope; even then it was not quite dead, and required another shot. Its length was ten feet nine and a half inches, and the skin is now in our house at home.

The sequel was rather amusing. The Angoulu boys had intended eating it, but they got so chaffed by the Angonies about their peculiar taste in meat, that, notwithstanding the trouble they had had, they suddenly refused to touch the python, and we had some difficulty in getting it skinned. We

## Lilongwe to Fort Jameson

found none of the reported game, though we could see for a considerable distance up and down the dambo. In a country in which belts of forest alternate with open grass lands, the beasts would not leave the shelter of the trees till the sun was down, and they got under cover again at earliest dawn. That afternoon "Curlpapers" and two other of my machilla boys, who had gone off to a village to buy food, lighted on a herd of kudu in the forest, but their report came too late to be of use.

Up to the time we reached Kalolo the weather on the plateau had been delightfully cool. A sudden change had come, however; the sun became fiercely hot, and even the nights were very stuffy. This continued for the next few days and culminated in the three days' heavy rain we had on the Bua, which, though we did not know it at the time, was to spoil our sport in North-East Rhodesia.

Next morning (5th October) we followed the course of the Namitete River until we reached the high road we had left at Kalolo, and here we breakfasted. The only game we saw except an oribi, which came in usefully for the pot, was a young bull eland with two cows.

As we were now a day behind time, we thought that in place of going another day's march to the westward, as we had intended, we might just as well follow the Namitete to its junction with the Bua, thinking that we were as likely to find game along its course as anywhere else. In this we were mistaken, for though the country was as "gamey"

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

looking as any country we have seen, we found nothing whatever till we were nearing the junction of the Bua and Karuzi rivers.

We followed the Namitete for another two hours, and camped near a village, but were unable to fix our exact position, as the names of villages marked on the map were not known locally. We knew, however, that we must have covered about half the distance to the Bua river.

Notwithstanding the shade of a large sausage tree, our camp was an unpleasant one; it was close to a mealie field. The ground, covered with large dried leaves and other débris harbouring insects, took some time to clear.

It struck me as curious a by no means attractive camping ground was often transformed into quite a pleasant place as soon as the tent was pitched, the cook had settled on a spot and lit his fire, the porters had made little groups around each mess according to their tribe or position in the caravan; the whole became interesting and homelike.

We had here our first real experience of the Achepeta. Stupider, more ignorant and more unenterprising natives it has never been our fate to see. Half a century ago the tribe had been conquered by the Angonies, who had then recently migrated northwards, and up to the time of the British occupation of the country they had been continually subjected to Angonie raids. As a means of resistance the Achepeta fortified their villages: quite extensive earthworks still remain, and some villages are entirely hidden behind

## Lilongwe to Fort Jameson

circular Euphorbia plantations, so dense that cannon would be required to force an entrance.

The fear of these Angonie raiding parties confined the Achepeta to the immediate neighbourhood of their villages, and to this is probably due the extraordinary ignorance they have of the country in which they live, and the extreme disinclination they show to leaving their homes, even to guide one only to the next village. They are possibly descendants of slaves from the interior liberated by Livingstone in 1859. If so, this would account for their timidity. It is curious, however, that a generation of peace should not have done more to improve them. I cannot help thinking that their type must be a hopelessly low one.

The native houses here, as in other parts of Africa, are built of tree trunks placed close together and plastered with mud. The roofs are made of plaited basket work thatched with long grass; they are conical in shape, and are hoisted into position after being put together on the ground. Outside each village there are pigeon and chicken houses made of the same pattern, and also, what I took to be beehives, but which proved to be miniature houses erected as homes for the spirits of departed worthies. Each man has a presiding spirit, and it is his duty to propitiate it by offerings.

There are large circular granaries of plaited basket-work on the outskirts of most villages, out of which the elephants freely feed when in the neighbourhood. They always come by night, and



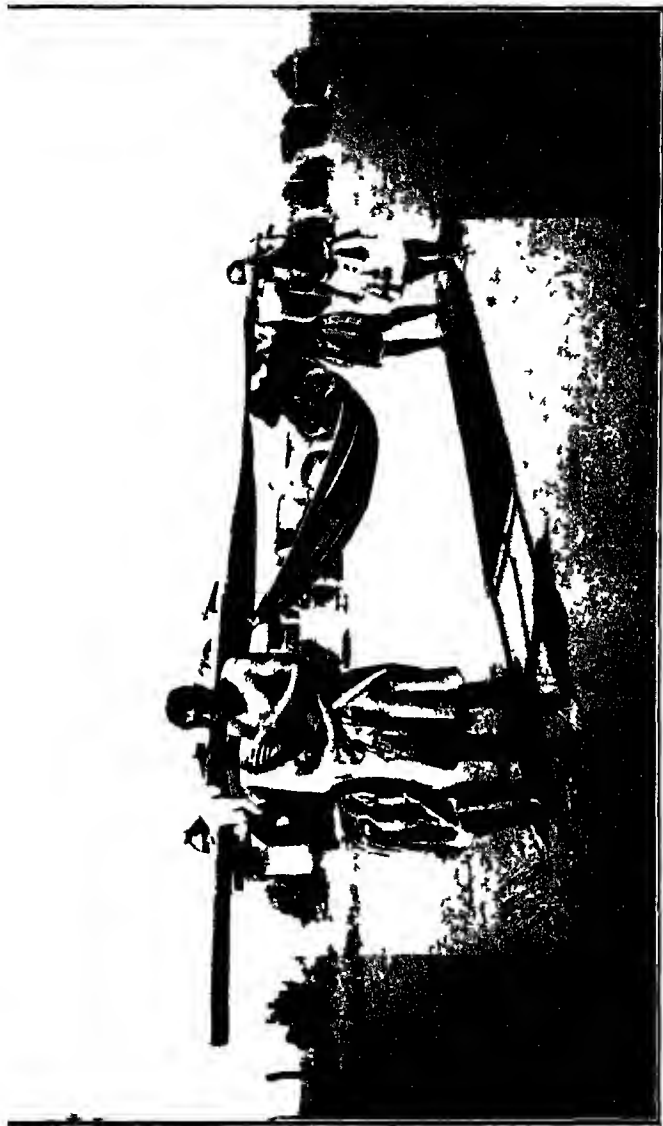
## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

the unfortunate owners dare not do anything to chase them away; for if they interfered with them, the intelligent beasts would retaliate at once and demolish a hut or two. Natives appear to look upon these feeds of grain as a sort of tribute the elephants are entitled to levy.

Tobacco is cultivated in every village garden. Aborigines do not smoke, but use it in the form of snuff; and I have constantly seen our men stop local natives on the road and beg a pinch from them.

The women grind corn between two stones, or they pound it in high wooden troughs hollowed out of tree trunks, using heavy wooden mallets for the purpose, and then sift the flour into baskets. They keep very little flour by them, pounding it when wanted, a system which used to cause us at times considerable delay; for if the men had to go any distance to buy food, they had in addition to wait while the corn was being crushed for them by the women; however, in Nyasaland, as a rule, the nearest village could generally supply sufficient for our needs.

Soon after our arrival in camp, the local chief would usually turn up to pay his compliments, and he almost invariably brought with him a present of fowls, mealie flour, and sometimes a goat, in exchange for which he received what natives call a "prize," the value depending on the local price of the fowls and flour he had given us, with an extra remuneration for any services he rendered, such as the provision of guides, hunters, or porters. In Nyasaland the chiefs were usually paid in money;



Author in Machilla at Fort Melangani.

[See p 55



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in North-East Rhodesia in calico or so-called "trade cloth," though we always gave money if they preferred it. Sometimes these payments were delayed until the time of our departure, to ensure the due fulfilment of any promises that might have been made.

When there was a scarcity of native flour,<sup>1</sup> every scrap we could obtain was in great demand, and Saidi or the machilla capitao or even porters would come and bespeak a share a day ahead. We always endeavoured to distribute the chief's present of flour as fairly as possible among the men. We ourselves carried our own wheat flour.

On the 6th we marched to Kongonis, not getting into camp till noon. We pitched our tents in a nice clump of shady trees half a mile or so from the river Bua—at this time of the year a large marsh—which in the rainy season must widen into a lake. We had seen no game all the morning; but as much of the grass was still unburnt, it might have been there without our knowledge. Both day and night proved oppressively hot, and everything pointed to a heavy storm.

Next morning we crossed the Bua river—a somewhat troublesome operation. We had first to walk across a long narrow bridge of poles loosely tied together and laid across the swampy ground which led to the channel. Having accomplished the bridge with its many gaps in safety, we had to get on to a raft built of reeds having a framework of poles, a rather rickety conveyance, and be paddled across

<sup>1</sup> Generally of maize, sometimes of cassava root.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

the channel, which was about fifty yards broad, deep, and with a fairly strong current. So soon as the water was negotiated in safety, we had to climb up on to another bridge and walk along it to dry land.

There was a dug-out in addition to the raft, and "Cooky," who apparently added the waterman's craft to his other accomplishments, paddled many of our loads over in it. Crossing the baggage took some time, so that while it was in progress we sat down by the roadside and had breakfast, the thunder rumbling round us all the time. Fortunately, however, the storm did not break; for had it done so, it would have been difficult to have found shelter. In the end everything was got over in safety. The machillas gave some trouble, as there was only just room for them on the raft, and we were afraid that they would get wet.

Locusts abounded by the riverside, with fat pink bodies and a double pair of gauzy wings. When cooked they taste very like prawns.

After the crossing, we turned northwards and followed the course of the Bua river, intending, if possible, to reach its junction with the Karusi. We had lost so much time, however, that when noon arrived we had only completed some three-quarters of the distance. We stopped soon afterwards and pitched camp on rising ground overlooking the river valley. On the way we had had to cross a very nasty swamp, in which the papyrus reeds were well over our heads, and the bottom so soft that several of the men sank down almost to their waists. The whole of the machilla teams, as

## Lilongwe to Fort Jameson

well as the gun-bearers, were needed to get us over dry, and even then it was touch-and-go, and at one place we were practically passed from hand to hand. Going through the reeds I was badly stung by "fly."

That afternoon a violent storm came on, which lasted several hours, greatly cooling the air.

The 8th we marched to the Karusi river, seeing game, the first for some days. The river valley is broad and perfectly open, except for patches of reeds here and there; but by moving through the edge of the forest which skirts it we were able to see without being seen. A—— shot a reedbuck and a couple of oribi, and just before reaching our journey's end he shot his first puku (*cobus vardonii*), a beautiful little antelope of a bright chestnut colour. Soon after we saw a number of these pretty beasts, who stood and looked at us as we passed, and then scampered off out of range. As we had got our specimen, they were left in peace.

The river channel was dry except for the large marshy waterholes which still remained here and there. Wild fowl were flying about, and we got two ducks, one of which I skinned, and later on a goose.

We pitched our tents under the shade of a mimosa tree growing out of the middle of a great ant-heap, a frequent sight in the jungle. I often wondered which came first—the ants or the tree. That night there was heavy rain. Most of the men had made shelters for themselves; but the servants, poor fellows, had to share a small spare tent with our dried skins.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Whenever there was a prospect of seeing game A—— usually started half an hour or so ahead of the caravan, and walked for a time, leaving his machilla to follow. I always remained behind until the loads were ready; but as the jog-trot of my machilla boys soon outdistanced the porters, I generally sighted A——'s party before going very far. We had to keep a sharp look-out when nearing A——, to see that there was no game afoot; and if he was actually stalking, stop and hide the machilla and team as best we could. The machilla boys gave me no trouble, as they quickly realized that their meat depended on their keeping quiet.

On the morning of the 9th—a red-letter day in the annals of our expedition—A—— was on the road by 6.15 A.M., and when I joined him half an hour later I found that he had just shot a splendid kudu bull. He and his party had been walking quietly along, the machilla and its team well in the rear, when the bull, accompanied by two cows, walked quite suddenly out of the forest about four hundred yards ahead. Fortunately A—— was able to get behind a friendly ant-heap with his followers before he was perceived. The wind was favourable; and the kudu seeing nothing, proceeded to walk quietly across the dambo, feeding as they went. Another ant-heap assisted a quick stalk to a rather easier distance, and a right and left shot finished the transaction.

To utilize the long wait entailed by skinning and cutting up of the poor beast we established ourselves under a tree and had our breakfast unusually early.

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Afterwards we again started, and A—— sighted three bull hartebeest feeding on the edge of the forest.

The wind was right; and as a number of large ant-heaps made stalking fairly easy, he was able to get within a hundred yards of them unperceived; and seeing from the top of the ant-heap on to which he had climbed that the heads were good ones and of about the same size, he shot all three before they had time to move.

With all this meat it was necessary to stop at once, so we pitched our tents at the edge of the forest and sent to the nearest villages to tell the chiefs we had plenty of meat and wanted flour in exchange. Our messages brought in a fair supply towards evening, but not as much as we had hoped. We were getting into rather a "hungry" country as regards grain. There was great feasting in our camp that night.

The following day we marched along the Karuzi river, rising very gradually all the way till we reached the level of Chetunde Hill, and encamped in the forest near the telegraph line, and about half a mile from a large village, our altitude being three thousand six hundred and fifty feet. The morning was damp and foggy, but the weather improved later. We only saw a herd of roan, and were very glad when our journey came to an end, for it had been considerably longer than usual, in view of the short march of the previous day. The chief proved very friendly, and reported that there was game in the neighbourhood. He promised us efficient



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guides. That evening we saw some kudu cows, but no bull. A herd of eland was reported in the neighbourhood, and A—— went out to investigate the water-hole, two or three miles distant, at which the animals were in the habit of drinking, but alas! found it dry. He spent the 11th searching for eland, but without success. The local guides had no conception where to find them; and though fairly fresh tracks were visible in the forest, the ground was so hard and dry that it was impossible to follow the spoor for any distance.

In the evening A—— had a bit of luck. He had heard that sable drank at the water-holes near the village, but had not believed the story, thinking that there were no sable so far north; but about 5 P.M. the servants came to tell me that sable were feeding on the edge of the forest about a mile off. Getting on to an ant-heap just outside the camp, I was able to see them quite distinctly through my glasses. I sent messengers in every direction to find A——, and he luckily met one of them just in time, got up to the herd before it was too dark, and shot the old bull.

John went out with some porters and a number of villagers to bring in the beast. Singing lustily, they returned carrying torches, as it was pitch dark. I tried to take a flashlight photograph of the scene, but our lights being damp the picture unfortunately failed.

John skinned and cut up the beast by the light of the camp-fire during our dinner hour. That night there was much feasting and pombe drinking,

## Lilongwe to Fort Jameson

in which many of the villagers joined; so much so that once at least we had to send over to the porters' camp to stop the noise.

The 12th we started at 6 A.M., and marched across to the junction of the Rusa and Livilezi rivers, much to the disgust of our followers, who had hoped for another day at Chetunde Hill, as a pombe drink and a dance was being arranged for in their honour. It was just this pombe drink which decided us to move on, for it would have much disorganized the caravan and upset the men for several days.

We had hoped that the eland, driven by want of water from Chetunde Hill, might have moved across to the Livilezi. But in this we were disappointed; and when we got there the natives told us that they never visited that portion of the country except in the wet season. This part of the Livilezi is flat and open, and the river appeared to lose itself in a series of marshes. Next morning we followed the course of the Livilezi westward until 11 A.M. We saw a number of roan antelope and many traces of elephant.

Whenever we reached a new encampment A—— was in the habit of sending to the nearest village for the chief and any other native who might know something about the game in the neighbourhood, and to interview them while waiting for the caravan to arrive. Many and various were the yarns he used to hear; but on this occasion the village liar excelled himself, and there was hardly an animal mentioned in the game book that did not abound

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in the immediate vicinity of his village. Unfortunately for him, his chief arrived soon afterwards and gave him away, but he remained quite unabashed. He had a strong sense of humour, and stayed with us for several days, being quite useful as a guide.

The 14th we followed the Livilezi until we reached the Fort Alston—Fort Manning Road, where we encamped. The marshes were left behind, and the river now ran through a valley in which rocky gorges covered with forest alternated with open stretches of meadow-land. Roan antelope were seen on the way, and A—— shot a waterbuck. Everywhere there were traces of elephant. We stopped early in the day, as our men were short of flour; and having heard that at some distant village sufficient flour could be bought to last them until Fort Jameson, several men were allowed to go and fetch it; they were all back soon after nightfall. We attributed some recent cases of dysentery in the caravan to an excess of meat.

15th.—Continuing along the Livilezi till close to the foothills, we halted in a large dambo for breakfast. During the meal two natives with dogs turned up and assured A—— that they could show him eland. They took him a long tramp in the hot sun, but finally were unable even to point out spoor. In the meantime the camp had been pitched at the edge of a wood; it was a delightful spot, the prettiest we had had for some time, with a charming view of the mountains, and from it we could see both zebra and hartebeest grazing in the dambo. That afternoon we sent off a messenger to the African



Dedza Mountain from the Boma.

[See p. 56.]



## Lilongwe to Fort Jameson

Lakes Company at Fort Jameson to say that we hoped to arrive there the next day. I also took the opportunity of photographing my machilla team and the porters with their loads, as after Fort Jameson we anticipated changes.

16th.—As we had a long journey before us, we were under way by 6 A.M. For the first few miles our route ran along the edge of the foothills, and we saw both zebra and hartebeest along the road. We then turned westward into a belt of dense forest and followed a native path that cut across the hills to Fort Jameson. The scenery was fine and bold. We found ourselves once more on the banks of the Livilezi, where its channel formed a deep gorge. After skirting the river for another hour or so, rising all the way, we got on to the rolling-down-like country which forms the summit of the Michingi range and stopped at 11 A.M. Fort Jameson, though no great distance as the crow flies, was still ten or twelve miles by road. Everyone was tired, and we decided to camp. While the tents were being pitched the messenger we had sent to Fort Jameson the previous day returned with letters, among them a most kindly-worded invitation from Judge Beaufort offering us hospitality during our stay. This letter caused us to change our plans again. We started off the bulk of our loads at 2.30 P.M., and followed ourselves at 4.30.

After a mile or two, the road descending abruptly from the frontier mountains over which we had been travelling to the North-East Rhodesian plain, was so steep that we had to get out of our machillas

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and scramble down as best we could. Once at the bottom, however, and on the high road—the one we had left after crossing the Bua—our machilla teams, overjoyed at the idea of reaching their journey's end, raced along singing and shouting at the top of their voices.

Soon the sight of well-kept roads, bordered by avenues of trees and gaily-dressed natives wearing brightly-coloured draperies, marked the approach to a settlement, and by 6 P.M. we had the pleasure of seeing our caravan waiting for us outside Judge Beaufort's private grounds.

We were most kindly welcomed by Judge and Mrs. Beaufort, who put their spare room at our disposal. I was not prepared to find all the luxury of an English country house in the centre of Africa, and should have been quite content with our camp kit in an empty room, instead of which we were provided with china basins and clean sheets—a most refreshing change from tin basins and camp blankets. Fortunately our trunk, with a few civilized clothes, had been sent on ahead from Lilongwe, so that the following evening it was possible to put on evening dress in honour of our hosts and the guests they were kind enough to invite to meet us.

Before continuing our travels into North-East Rhodesia, it might be interesting to consider the sport and other advantages Nyasaland offers to the settler and trader.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SPORT IN NYASALAND.

BY COLONEL COLVILLE, C.B.

As elsewhere, shooting in Nyasaland has good and bad points. Our impressions are the result of only six weeks' experience of the country, so that we do not wish to dogmatize; but such as they are, we give them in the hope they may be of use to others. Among the advantages I would place the cheap and liberal licence and the easy conditions drawn up by a sportsman for the benefit of sportsmen; the comparative facility with which kudu and sable can be obtained by those who desire these handsome beasts; and lastly, freedom of movement during the dry season, porters and food being everywhere easily obtainable.

Under the disadvantages I would place the disagreeables of the journey to or from the coast, according to the season of the year; the short time available for sport; its "chuck and chance it" nature, to use a fishing term; the somewhat oppressive and relaxing heat of the lowlands, where the best sport is to be obtained; and the dryness and monotony of the forests.

The licence costs £4, and this enables one to shoot everything with the exception of elephant. If



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you fire a shot at an elephant you have to report the circumstance to the nearest Boma, and forward an additional £21.

I have forgotten the exact number of each species that are allowed to be shot under the licence, but it includes two elephant, four kudu, four sable or roan, two puku, and a large number of the commoner sorts of game. Buffalo and eland are protected, but permission is readily given to bona fide sportsmen to shoot one of the former and two of the latter.

The highlands of Nyasaland are more open than the lowlands, but nearly everywhere the land is covered with small acacia forest, except in the neighbourhood of the rivers, where the trees are larger and the undergrowth denser. The country is, so far as our experience goes, well watered, the roads are good, and in the dry season, at least, no obstacles are likely to offer themselves to free movement. There are plenty of villages standing in large clearings, and except for the Achebeta tribe, the natives are intelligent and glad to see travellers. We had no difficulty in getting porters whenever we had occasion to apply for them at the Bomas, and as servants Nyasaland boys are well spoken of throughout this part of Africa.

Food supplies are abundant; at least our men had never the smallest trouble in procuring flour and cassava. We, on our side, were always able to purchase eggs, fowls, and goats.

The climate is somewhat unhealthy; but we

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would not lay too much stress on this, as it does not affect those who limit their stay to a few months during the best season of the year, who avoid notoriously unhealthy spots, camp at a reasonable distance from water, and clear the grass from the neighbourhood of their tents. I will not go so far as to say that we never heard a mosquito, but they were few and far between, and in camp they gave us no trouble. We enjoyed the best of health throughout our stay in Nyasaland.<sup>1</sup>

The duration of the shooting season is somewhat limited, and may be taken to commence about the middle of August, with the burning of grass, and to close, except for elephant, with the advent of the heavy rains in November. We were told that it was useless to attempt to shoot before the middle of August; but I think we were, for several reasons, a month too late, so that should we ever revisit the country we would endeavour to reach Blantyre by the second week of July.

What is actually the best period of the year for sport in this country is difficult to say, and opinions on the subject may easily differ; it depends greatly on local conditions, which are liable to alteration. In some parts the season of the early rains is the most favourable one; in others, that period of the year when game concentrates round the village gardens to feed on the crops; again, in others the season immediately following the burning of the grass, which, though it scatters the beasts in the first instance, drives them, after a few days' interval,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 124.

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to definite feeding grounds, where they are easily located by those who know the country.

Judging from the game we saw, we passed the low country on both sides of Liwonde at the very best period of the year for sport. At Mua, at about the same altitude and only ten days later, we were just too late. But whether it was the increasing heat, or the harvesting of the Mission gardens, or the energy of the good Fathers that had driven the game away, we cannot say; we found nothing.

In the Chongoni mountain district the season could not have been bettered, though in one portion of it we found game, and in another, equally good to all appearance, we found none.

On the Shire we could hardly go out without seeing an eland. Between the Bua river and the mountains we saw never a one, although hundreds roam in the forests. They had just quitted their usual haunts and had moved into the hills, driven upwards by the increasing heat and scarcity of water, and we had no one to tell us where to find them. To save time we, unfortunately, avoided Fort Manning. Had we not done so we should have had definite information from a friend quartered there.

The best method of obtaining sport in the Nyasaland forests is to do what the residents do—viz., employ good hunters, who go out with the local natives and locate game for their masters. Good hunters are, unfortunately, rare. Ours were by no means good—we are not referring to old Saidi—and we soon found out that their idea

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of locating game was drinking pombe in the nearest village; but, even if they had been good, we had hardly sufficient time at our disposal to work the system properly. However, until we reached the Achepeta country the local natives were very willing to assist us, and whenever game was to be found in the neighbourhood of their villages they readily showed us to the feeding grounds. But this was not often the case, and we had then to adopt the "chuck and chance" system; or, in other words, wander through the forests under the guidance of one or more local natives, who were always making believe that they expected to sight game behind every thicket, but rarely, if ever, showed us any.

Still—stalking in a pleasant climate and amidst beautiful surroundings can be delightful enough, even though one may perchance not fire more than one shot in a month; but in a dry, black African forest, with a hot sun overhead and a heavy, heated atmosphere, it can never be anything but tedious in the extreme. The sportsman can of course get into his machilla, but once in it, his connection with the sport practically ceases; and if by chance his natives do stumble upon game, by the time he has struggled out and seized his rifle the beasts will have vanished.

Our men were fair trackers, and we used to vary the monotony by following the tracks, both old and new, that we occasionally struck. But here again a great difficulty arose, for in August and September everything is intensely dry, and as the

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ground is covered with dead leaves, twigs, and branches, it is extremely difficult to move with the stillness requisite in forest hunting.

**Elephant.**—Elephants are very numerous in the Reserve to the westward of the high road in Central Angoniland, and fairly so in the Bua district. Seventy pounds is considered a good tusk; but big elephants are not easy to find, for every resident is an elephant hunter—so much so that the desire to meet with other game is hardly understood—and, besides, the district is frequented by professional hunters from over the Rhodesian border, much to the disgust of the local sportsmen.

The herds are a good deal harried, so they keep continually on the move, and it is consequently difficult to get in touch with them. Water as well as food must be carried, as the country is short of water in the dry season, and two or three nights out on the spoor are not unlikely. Only once did we chance on elephants, and then they were on the edge of the reserve, in an inaccessible position so far as we were concerned. None were met with in the Bua country, and though a single bull was reported on two occasions as having been seen the previous night in the immediate vicinity of our camp, we were unable to follow the tracks owing to the difficulties entailed.

It is waste of time to follow spoor for a few hours and then relinquish it; and as one cannot go after elephant with a large following, it would have necessitated a division of the caravan. I must have

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started off with a few men, and my wife have remained behind alone for an indefinite time—an impossible arrangement in the African wilds.

A professional elephant hunter, who reached Fort Jameson with four fine tusks, told us that it had taken him seven weeks' incessant hard work to get them, and that his boys had wanted to give out more than once.

**Kudu** (*Strepsiceros capensis*).—We have good authority for saying that kudu are plentiful throughout the South Nyasa district and along the southern shores of the Lake; though, like all kudu, they are difficult to find, and except at Chendawasika, where they were feeding in the village gardens, we were unlucky as regards actually seeing them. They are to be found, we believe, in the Mlanje district. Somewhat to our surprise, we met them on the Bua, and they were reported along the mountains which form the boundary between Nyasaland and North-East Rhodesia. The licence allows four to be shot; we only got two, but a third was lost through mischance, and a little better luck, if not better management, would easily have given us our number.

**Sable** (*Hippotragus niger*).—Sable are fairly plentiful along the Shire. We saw two herds from our first camp in that district, and in the highlands we met them at intervals from Fort Melangani to Lilongwe, the Chongoni mountain district providing three out of our four heads.

We were told not to expect them north of the Bua; but that they are to be found there was

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evidenced by our shooting one at the village near Chetunde Hill.

The drawback as regards the Nyasaland sable is the small size of the heads, which do not compare with those to be obtained in Rhodesia, near Broken Hill. We were told that forty inches was a good head for the country. Three of ours were just over forty inches, and one thirty-nine and a half. Curiously enough, it was the oldest beast of the four.

**Eland.**—Eland are plentiful, but we were unfortunately unable to procure the two Sir Alfred Sharpe kindly allowed us. On the Shire we saw them in numbers. There were large herds round every village, and the villagers were most anxious for us to shoot, but the heads are heavy to carry about, and as we were told that there were equally large herds and better heads in the Bua district, we desisted. When eventually we reached the Bua, the country was getting very dry, the eland had left their usual haunts and we never saw a beast: it was the old story of the bird in the hand. One eland we did get from Dedza Boma, but not in Nyasaland, as it was one of a large herd that lived just over the boundary in Portuguese territory, and which must have numbered from one hundred to one hundred and fifty beasts. We had hoped for a thirty-inch head from Nyasaland. Alas! we are still waiting.

**Buffalo.**—In days gone by these beasts were very plentiful, but they were decimated by the rinderpest. They are to be found, we believe, in

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fair numbers near Chiromo, and there is also a small herd near the Mua Mission. These buffalo live in a marsh extremely difficult of access, which they rarely leave except by night. We found their tracks in the forest; and as the natives in the village near the marsh see them occasionally, we should doubtless have had a shot had we been able to devote a week or more to watching for them.

**Wildebeest.**—The so-called Nyasaland wildebeest, a variety of the brindled gnu, with a large white blaze on its nose, we had counted upon with some certainty, in view of its name. It was with considerable surprise and disappointment, therefore, that we heard that the beast does not live in the country, and that he was only to be found in Portuguese territory, where he is by no means numerous. The North-East Rhodesian wildebeest is the ordinary black bearded variety of the brindled gnu.

**Roan.**—Roan antelope are very plentiful in the Bua country, right up to the mountains. We did not shoot them, because sable and roan come under the same heading in the licence, and we had obtained our complement of the former.

**Waterbuck** (*Cobus defassa*) were fairly numerous along our route, but the heads were poor, not worth shooting.

**Bushbuck** (*Tragelophus scriptus*) are, we believe, in fair numbers, but they are difficult to find. We shot one on the Shire, and another on top of Dedza mountain.

**Lichenstein Hartebeest** (*Babalis lichten-*



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*steini*) we saw along the Shire. To the south of Lilongwe and in the Bua country as far as the mountains they are not very numerous, nor do they run in large herds as hartebeest do in East Africa and elsewhere.

**Zebra** we saw on the Shire, and again in the Bua country, in fair numbers.

**Puku** (*Cobus vardonii*) are only to be found on the Bua, and we were much looking forward to seeing them. Unfortunately the heads proved to be very poor, not worth shooting; but this did not matter, as we subsequently saw great numbers in North-East Rhodesia. They are now very properly protected in Nyasaland, and only two are allowed on the licence. A few years ago the heads had a certain commercial value, and report has it that a professional hunter came from over the border and shot every sizeable head in the herd. Even now the Governor can with difficulty restrain his very righteous indignation.

**Lions** are pretty well exterminated in the country we passed through, and we neither saw nor heard them. One was reported on the line of march the first day out from Lilongwe, but though quickly out of the machilla I failed to see it, and very possibly it was only a hyena.

## CHAPTER X.

### PRODUCTS AND RESOURCES OF NYASALAND.

*(Compiled from Official Papers.)*

THE European population of Nyasaland in 1896 numbered only 345; in 1907 it had increased to 587; in 1909 it numbered 595, while the natives were estimated at 996,166, and Asiatics 457. The Europeans are of four classes: officials, missionaries, planters, traders, and, of course, their families.

**Crops.**—The chief crops grown by the planters are cotton, tobacco, rubber, coffee, and tea.

**Trading.**—Trading is mostly confined to large companies, the principal one being the African Lakes Co., whose chief office is in Glasgow. There is also the Blantyre and East Africa Co., whose headquarters are at Lauderdale. Besides these there are a few European and a larger number of Indian traders.

**Imports.**—Imported goods are mostly cotton stuffs from Manchester and Bombay; beads from Birmingham and Venice; blankets from England, India, and Austria; fezzes from Algiers and Newcastle-under-Lyme; boots from Northampton; felt hats, hardware, brass wire and hoes from Birmingham; cutlery from Sheffield; fancy goods from

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

India. Goods are now also being imported from Germany.

**Exports.**—The principal exports are cotton, tobacco, ivory, hippo teeth, rubber, oil seeds, bees-wax, strophanthus drug, chillies, ground-nuts, rice, fibre, tea, cattle, etc.

**Transit.**—The trade in Nyasaland is much handicapped by distance; and from there being no direct line of rail to the coast, all merchandise has to be conveyed down the Zambesi to Chinde, and that only at certain times of the year.

The Germans are building a line called "Central East African Railway," through their territory from Dar-e-salaam, which has a beautiful natural harbour to Tabora. The Cape to Cairo Railway will eventually cross this point, which the Germans hope to reach in 1914. So far the construction has been carried five hundred and twenty kilometres inland. Whether this line will be continued from Tabora to Udjidji on Lake Tanganyika has not yet been decided by the Reichstag. It will therefore be some years before extensions can be carried on to Lake Nyasa; but when this is accomplished, which is only a matter of time, it will be a great outlet for the trade of Nyasaland, for steamers will be able to deposit goods at railhead. There are at present seven steamers on the Lake.

A time will no doubt also come when a railway will be built from Beira to the Zambesi, and this could be continued on the east side of the river to Port Herald. Beira has a good natural harbour, while the coast at Chinde is at all times difficult

## Products and Resources of Nyasaland

to navigate, large steamers being unable to get within twenty miles. At present all merchandise is shipped on lighters, which are conveyed by tugs to Beira.

Notwithstanding the drawbacks of transit, the general external trade of Nyasaland is gradually rising, that of 1908-09 exceeding the previous year by £125,415. The export trade has also increased by four hundred and eighty-three tons in weight and £27,420 in net value in the same time, chiefly due to cotton and coffee. Rice amounting to two hundred and twenty-seven tons, fibre and tea appear among the new exports. There has been a decrease in strophanthus and ground-nuts, which are not systematically cultivated, and are only purchased from natives in uncertain quantities.

The report 1909-10 says that planters have been very successful in the past year. Large tracts are now under cultivation, and "at no time of its history have such large areas of virgin land been opened up for planting or the demand for good land been so keen as at present."

**Cotton.**—Cotton remains the first crop in acreage and value that the Protectorate produces. There are two industries, the European and the native. It is expected that the native industry will have greatly augmented in a few years. What keeps it back is the distance natives have to travel to obtain a market, sometimes as much as forty miles.

The production of cotton has gradually been increasing during the past five years, from two

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

hundred and eighty-five thousand one hundred and eighty-five pounds in 1904-05 to seven hundred and fifty-six thousand one hundred and twenty pounds in 1908-89. There is also an increasing yield per acre, some estates averaging as high as one hundred and sixty-five pounds, while in others as much as two cwt. per acre has been produced. The diseases and pests that cotton is subject to is being scientifically studied by the local Agricultural Department.

The highlands can grow the finest quality of upland cotton in the world, some samples fetching 6d. and 7d. a lb., when the same type of cotton grown in America only fetches 5d., the improved quality being attributed to the ripening of the crop during the rainless season of the year (April to August).

Egyptian cotton growing has not been altogether a success. Experience has shown that this variety is unsuited to the highlands. It is cultivated in the lowlands up to 1500 ft., and planters have found that February is the best month to plant this variety, while November is the month chosen for planting in the highlands.

In order to pay, a crop should have over a hundred lbs. of lint to the acre, and should fetch 4d. or 5d. per lb. in the home market. Some parcels have fetched 11d. per lb.

The British Cotton Association has established a ginnery at Port Herald, the centre of the largest district, and it is hoped they will open another nearer the Lake.

## Products and Resources of Nyasaland

**Tobacco.**—Tobacco is being grown successfully, and the quality is improving. The Imperial Tobacco Co. have a factory at Limbe, near Blantyre, which has stimulated the industry. According to the report, "the only complaint the Imperial Tobacco Co. have against the Protectorate is shortage of supply." Local prices range from 2d. to 8d. a lb., and samples sent home have been commended and valued by merchants at from 6d. to 9d. a lb. Tobacco requires considerable skill and attention, more so than any other crop in Nyasaland; so, unless it fetches a price above 4d. a lb. the grower gets little benefit, on account of the long distance the product must travel before being shipped. In 1905 fifty-six thousand seven hundred and twenty-six pounds were exported. This has increased yearly. In 1908-09 over five hundred thousand pounds left the country, the amount being valued at £14,253.

**Rubber.**—Rubber promises to be of some importance in Nyasaland, and within the next few years there should be a considerable export of the cultivated article. In 1908-09 over a thousand acres were planted, and more than three thousand five hundred are now under cultivation.

The Director of Agriculture in his report says: "Three ounces dry rubber per tree will be a good average yield for trees over four years old in Nyasaland, and I should not advise anyone to base his calculations on a higher return." He does not recommend planters to go in for *Ceara* on a large scale, for no data as to the life of the

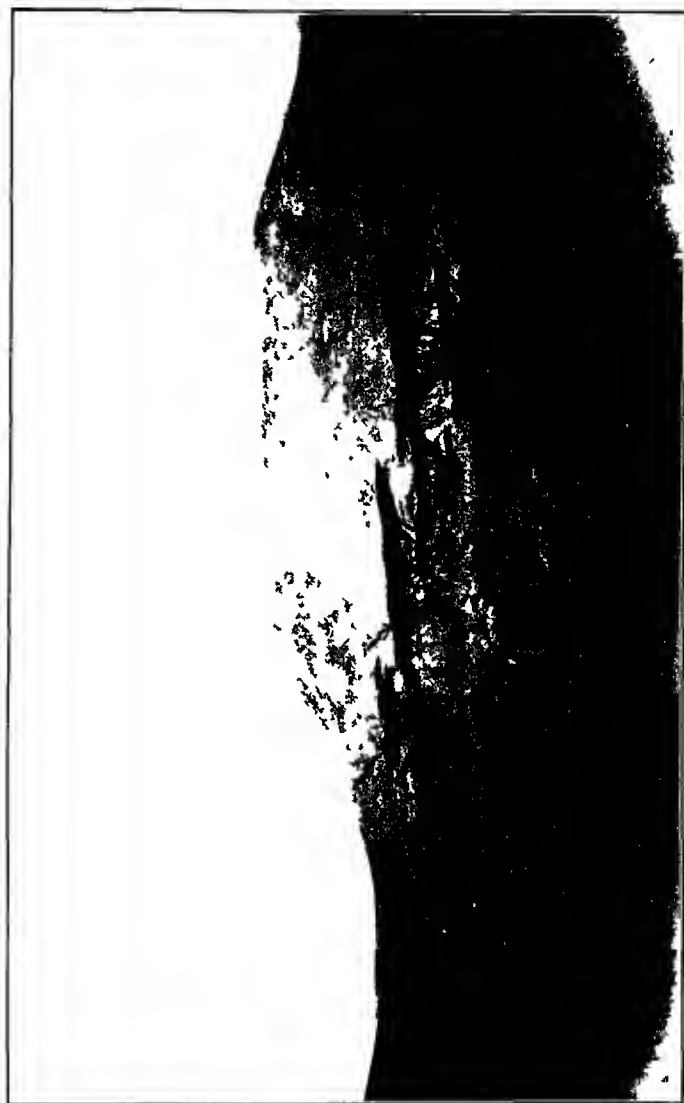
## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

tree has so far been arrived at, but it appears to be the sort best suited to the climate, and has done extremely well in suitable soils. The price of *Ceara* rubber in London is 8s. 10d. per lb.

The Para (*Hevea Brasillensis*) requires a moister climate, and is cultivated in the West Nyasa district, where the rainfall is abundant. Three-year-old plants are now twenty feet high. Fifteen thousand four hundred and fifteen pounds of rubber was exported in 1908-9, valued at £3,083, of which one thousand five hundred and fourteen pounds was the cultivated variety, the remainder having been collected from wild vines. There is an export duty of 4d. a lb. on uncultivated rubber, but the other is allowed to be exported free of duty.

**Hemp.**—Sisal and Mauritius hems are grown by many planters, Sisal being generally preferred, as more easily grown and its fibre of better quality. The greater the cultivation the more remunerative it will become, as thoroughly proved machinery is essential for preparing the fibre. These hems are chiefly cultivated in the Blantyre district, and now cover nine hundred and twenty-eight acres.

**Coffee.**—The export and growing of coffee has decreased of late, owing to other crops having been taken up by planters. The season of 1896-97 produced such exceptional high quality coffee that there was much competition for it in the home markets, where it fetched from 105/- to 114/- per cwt. in London, but it has steadily fallen since. The West Shire district is the one best suited to



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## Products and Resources of Nyasaland

coffee growing, owing to there being lime in the soil. Good coffee land is available on lease at a moderate rent. Coffee Arabica does well in the Shire Highlands, and the best results are attained when the temperature in the shade does not exceed 93° or 95° F. Several sorts have been grown successfully in other districts. Pulping is done by machinery, and there are two pulpers at Blantyre and one at Mlanje. Great care and judgment are required during the subsequent curing stage.

**Tea.**—There are five hundred and ninety-eight acres of tea under cultivation in the Mlanje district. This area is within twenty miles of the Shire Railway, which is a great advantage; carriage to London costs 123s. per ton. There are one thousand acres now under tea in the Protectorate, and a further twenty thousand acres of suitable land awaiting cultivation. The quality of tea is superior to that grown in the low-lying districts of Ceylon, but the yield is less; experiments to increase this are being tried from 350 lb.—the average crop—to 400 lb. the acre.

West Nyasa is the only other ideal district for growing tea. A considerable quantity is consumed locally; we thought the quality excellent. In 1908-9 twenty-three thousand pounds were exported, and in the season ending March 1910 this had increased more than a third.

**Cocoa.**—Very probably in a few years cocoa will be among the exports, for some three-year-old plants of *Theobroma Cacao* have flourished in West Nyasa, and are now five feet high and bearing fruit.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

**Ground-Nuts.**—Ground-nuts have not yet been grown in any quantity by Europeans. Natives grow them for food, selling the surplus to European and Indian traders. One thousand three hundred and nineteen pounds were exported in 1908. The crop in 1909 was  $7\frac{1}{2}$  tons, since which three hundred and seventy-one acres have been planted. The estimated crop for 1910 is  $161\frac{1}{2}$  tons. I believe prices vary, but a few years ago they were fetching £20 a ton at Marseilles. In France they are much used in confectionery, as well as for vegetable butter and oil.

**Rice.**—Rice is cultivated on the shores of Lake Nyasa by natives only. The production is already enormous, and is capable of great extension. Good seed rice was originally imported from India by Government. In 1906 European and Indian traders bought 800 tons of rice from the native growers at Kota-Kota, since which there has been further cultivation. The industry is much handicapped by the distance from the coast, but notwithstanding this drawback 507,000 lb. were exported last year, besides a great deal consumed locally.

**Maize.**—Natives grow large quantities of maize for their own use. Their surplus can be bought for export at £1 to £1 5s. per ton in June, July, and August. This grain is valued at home at £5 12s. to £5 15s. per ton.

**Wheat.**—Wheat is an important crop, as the carriage on imported white flour makes it very costly. The crop last year was  $19\frac{3}{4}$  tons, since which one hundred and thirty-nine acres have been

## Products and Resources of Nyasaland

put under cultivation. The estimated crop for 1910 is  $24\frac{1}{2}$  tons.

**Chillies.**—Four hundred and twenty-six acres of chillies are under cultivation; they fetch 45s. to 55s. per cwt. in London. During the year ending March 1910, 119,126 lb. were exported, an increase of 72,000 lb. over the previous year.

**Beans.**—Natives grow several sorts of beans as well as potatoes, which they sell to Europeans.

During the past year one hundred and thirteen and a half acres have been planted with miscellaneous crops, which include sesame, peanuts, yams, flax, sweet potatoes, turmeric, food-stuffs, rice, and China grass.

**Cattle.**—The best district for cattle-raising is in Angoniland, on the high plateau west of Lake Nyasa and the Shire. It is thought that cattle-farming here would be a profitable undertaking. Cattle fetches a high price at Salisbury and Buluwayo, and its transport from Angoniland has been proved not difficult. The tsetse fly is found only in a small portion of the country; these districts can be avoided or passed through at night.

Native sheep of the fat-tailed variety are fairly plentiful in some provinces. Last year cattle numbered in the Protectorate 11,149 head, of which Central Angoniland produced 1,619, and only 25 out of that number died in this district. Of other animals in the Protectorate, donkeys numbered 218; goats, 734; sheep, 1,414; and pigs, 497. A large proportion of these animals is owned by natives. Nyasaland can boast of only three horses.

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**Minerals.**—The mineral survey of 1906-7 was disappointing, as although coal, graphite, limestone, ores of iron, tin, and corundum were found, they were not in sufficient quantity or of adequate quality to repay cost of working for export. The iron ore and limestones were, however, considered valuable for local use in the future.

**Coal.**—The survey of 1907-8 revealed the fact that good bituminous coal existed at Mount Waller. The seams, often several feet thick, are thought to extend under Lake Nyasa. This is considered a valuable asset to the Protectorate. Coal has been discovered in the Nkana districts, but is of inferior quality to that of Mount Waller, and would be more difficult to transport.

**Gold.**—Gold has been found in some districts; amongst others, in the Rivi-Rivi river, but not in sufficient quantities to repay working.

Many of the limestones—of which there appear to be several varieties—would be suitable for the manufacture of hydraulic lime or cement.

**Silver.**—From Chiwamba's village, Lilongwe, Central Angoniland, a specimen submitted to the Imperial Institute was found to contain metallic lead 75.6%, metallic silver 38 oz. 10 dwt. 2 grains per ton. In 1909 the ore was valued at about £7 for lead and £3 for silver per ton. It is not known, however, how far this mineral formation extends.

**Mica.**—New deposits of mica of good quality have also been recently found.

Clays suitable for firebricks, and also for ordinary pottery, have been located. Near the Mkoma





## Products and Resources of Nyasaland

Mission, Central Angoniland, a deposit of graphite has been discovered. A sample submitted for analysis was considered of good quality and valued at about £32 to £34 a ton. A firm of crucible manufacturers have despatched a representative to Central Angoniland to examine the deposit and report upon it. The result has not yet been ascertained. Graphite is to be found throughout Nyasaland.

**Iron Ore.**—Iron ore is smelted by native smiths all over the country, but only the surface bog ore, which is of poor quality, is worked by them. They have no appliances for dealing with the rich deposits of hematite ore which abound in several localities.

Some fine specimens of rock-crystal have been found in the province of Marimba, and the samples submitted to home experts were well reported on for optical purposes.

A prospector pays five shillings a month for his licence during the time it lasts.

### ACQUIRING LAND.

Land in the hands of the Crown suitable for cultivation is somewhat limited, so much being required for native reserves and other purposes.

Crown lands are leased or rented in preference to being sold. Most leases, however, contain "an option of purchase" clause enabling a tenant to buy the land outright towards the end of his first tenure. Half the rent paid goes towards the purchase price.



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Agricultural leases are granted for three to twenty-one years with option of renewal or purchase. Grazing agreements are on a yearly tenancy, which carries no right to cut timber, cultivate, or otherwise deal with the land. Building leases are granted for twenty-one years. Plots of one acre for trading stores are let on yearly tenancies; rent, £2 10s. per annum, paid half yearly in advance. All rents for agricultural land are payable half yearly in advance, and vary according to the locality, the highest being at Blantyre and Chiromo, £15 per acre per annum, others at £10 and £5; the lowest at Liwonde, Mpimdi, and Kota-Kota at £2 10s. an acre per annum.

No free grants of land are made by Government for any purpose.

### NATIVE LABOUR.

Native labour is plentiful, and if unskilled costs about 6s. a month, including food. Fairly skilled labour is readily obtainable in the Shire Highlands; good carpenters, masons, brickmakers, and bricklayers are to be had. Wages vary from 10s. to 30s. a month, and an extra good man may get 40s. Local carpenters can make all ordinary household furniture, but it is exceptional for the work of even a skilled native ever to equal in finish that of the average European workman's; nor can one expect the same industry.

There are few openings for either professional men or European artisans in the Protectorate, and

## Products and Resources of Nyasaland

it would be unwise for any to go out unless employment has been assured to them beforehand by some of the large trading companies or the Government. Posts under Government are few, and when vacancies occur they are quickly filled up by men with special qualifications.

### LOCOMOTION.

Many officials have motor bicycles or ordinary push bicycles, but there is a difficulty in getting them repaired in the country. No mechanical knowledge is to be obtained; at least this was the case in 1908.

Rickshaws can be hired in Zomba and Blantyre; machillas are, however, universal all over the country. Horses are the *rara avis*. There are two at Zomba, privately owned, but they never leave the settlement on account of "fly."

A good Government road runs through the Protectorate, from Chiromo on the Shire to Karonga at the north of Lake Nyasa, a distance of five hundred miles. This thoroughfare has been of immense service in bringing the more remote parts of Nyasaland and their wilder inhabitants under the control of the administration. There are numerous "carrier roads," which are kept up by the local chiefs; these are only paths kept clear of brushwood.

The navigation of the upper Shire river became impeded during the spring of 1908 by floating masses of reeds and sudd; the Public Works and

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Marine Transport Department employed a large number of natives under Europeans to clear the passage, and a main channel sixty-five miles long and forty-eight feet wide was made at a cost of £400.

The Government has a forestry department, and many thousand eucalyptus and African mahogany trees have been planted, also on the Zomba plateau several species of pinus as well as the Mlanje cypress (*Widdringtonia Whytie*). Experiments are being made with other varieties of timber trees.

Afforestation in the country round Blantyre and Zomba is imperative. There is a very large demand for firewood, not only for domestic purposes, but for the tobacco industry and the railway. The cypress is considered a valuable asset; it has been found most serviceable for the Public Works Department, and can be felled and brought to its destination at a much lower price than the imported timber, but it cannot last for ever.

**Ebony.** — Ebony is found throughout the Protectorate. Samples of this wood have been valued in the home market at £4 10s. to £6 a ton. Carved articles and walking sticks of ebony can be very cheaply bought at Zanzibar and other coast towns.

**Camphor trees**, planted in Zomba in 1896, have done well. One flowered and fruited in 1907, the result being 850 young seedlings. About half of these have been distributed over various estates, and the remainder planted out in the Zomba experi-

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mental garden. In the same garden some plants of true ginger are being propagated. Ginger of a sort had been grown for some time, but it was found not to be the true kind.

In private gardens all sorts of fruit trees do well: pine apples are prolific; mangoes, peach, cherry and plum trees have been tried and are making good promise.

### CLIMATE AND HEALTH.

Nyasaland has practically two climates. In the low country, the valley of the Shire and Lake Nyasa, the climate is warm and damp. Just before the rains break the temperature may rise to  $120^{\circ}$  in the shade. In the highlands the maximum heat is from  $96^{\circ}$  to  $97^{\circ}$  during the hottest months, while in the cold season the minimum would be about  $40^{\circ}$ . The temperature of the high plateau in the early morning often falls below freezing point.

When we passed through—August to the middle of October—it was the driest season of the year. The rainy season commences with the small rains about the end of November and finishes at the end of March, the heaviest rainfall being during January and February. It is absolutely necessary for Europeans to be well housed during the wet season, and not attempt to live in huts, for that would mean courting fever. Malaria is pretty prevalent, sometimes taking the dangerous form known as “blackwater.”

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Little is known as to the actual cause of black-water fever, but it is no doubt an aggravated form of malaria, and if the latter is guarded against the former is not likely to occur. Some think that the sudden taking of large doses of quinine produce this form, that the veins get blocked with the dead microbes unable to pass out of the system. The taking of quinine should therefore be a safeguard; small doses at first, gradually increased at those times when much exposed to wet. I think it will be found that people who ward off attacks on first coming to the country will become acclimatised and less susceptible, while those who have succumbed to several bad attacks of fever will very easily go down again. However, experience has probably taught them how to treat the attack, so it need not necessarily be a long illness. As in other things, "prevention is better than cure."

The unhealthy spots are, no doubt, the low-lying ground near rivers. In the higher altitudes, with ordinary precautions, Europeans ought to keep good health. Children born in Nyasaland appeared healthy enough, but they should not remain after their third year. Much of the fever complained of is probably sun-fever, and preventable. I was surprised to see people under a tropical sun going about with light straw hats—no doubt the cause of many attacks. There is a good deal of mild gaiety at Blantyre and Zomba, which entails smart dressing. Sun hats of all kinds are ugly and unbecoming, so health is sacrificed to appearance, as is often done in other climes.

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Mosquitoes are probably another cause—a preventable one. At the present day there are none at Khartoum. Any one found with mosquito larvæ in his water jugs, or about the garden premises, is fined. This system has almost entirely eradicated them.

Chills arising from changes of temperature are difficult to guard against, but a good rule is to put on a light wrap at sunset. All water should be boiled, or better still, distilled. This is a great preventive of illness. At the slightest feeling of chill, or after great fatigue, quinine should be taken. On the smallest attack, remedies should at once be resorted to, so as not to allow the fever to get hold.

Europeans, on first coming out, think nothing of the sun, and often take liberties. After a few attacks of fever they learn by experience that the sun is not to be trifled with. Young men exposed for long hours to the sun, even with the head well protected, or whose work lies in low-lying ground, will very likely go down with fever unless they take quinine. One official told me he could be out all day long, wading in swampy ground, with no ill effects, as long as he did not fail to take his daily dose of five grains. People with whom ordinary quinine disagrees should try quinine hydrochlor, which is more easily digested. For some people cascara sagrada at night is necessary to counteract the constipating effects of quinine.

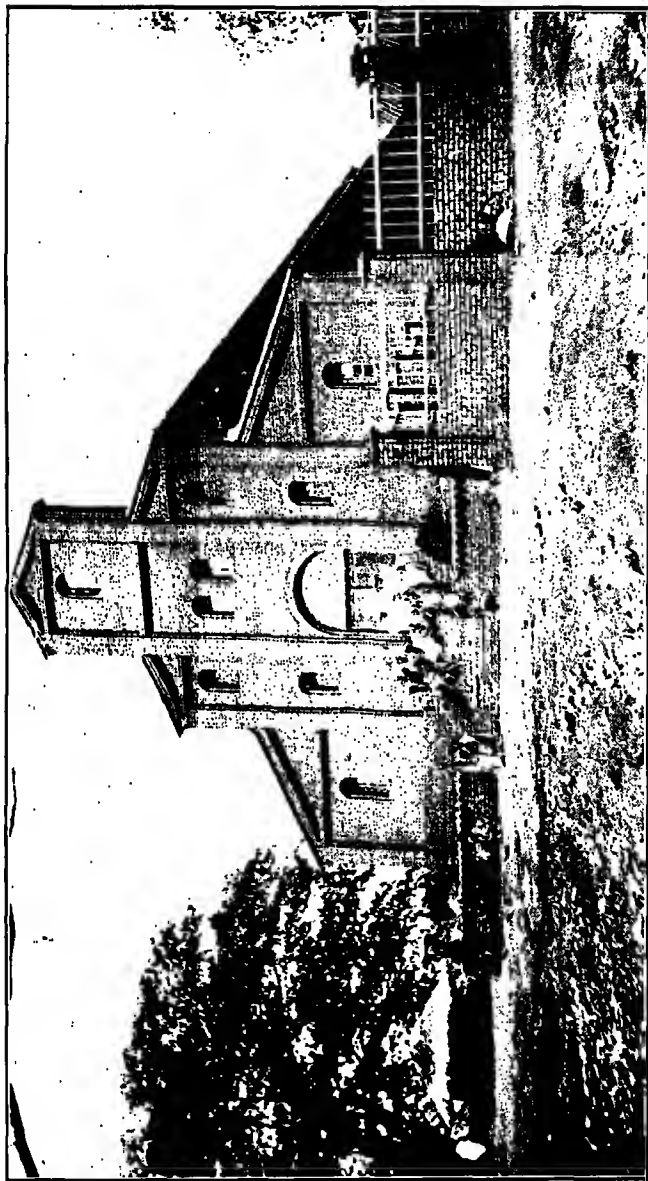
## PART II.

# NORTH-EAST RHODESIA.

### CHAPTER XI.

FORT JAMESON TO NAWALIA—ENGAGING NEW SERVANTS—KAMBIRI AND HIS WIVES—"CALICO POSHO."

FORT JAMESON, which is situated at an altitude of about three thousand three hundred feet, is a pleasant station, and includes within its boundaries an English church, comfortable bungalows, club and library, lawn tennis courts, a golf course, plenty of green grass, and avenues of trees. The place being free from "fly," a few people keep horses, also cows, mules, and other animals. We found the sun decidedly hot, but a cool wind from the mountains moderated what might have been otherwise an oppressive temperature. Notwithstanding its altitude, the climate was reported to be by no means too healthy, and we found that most of the residents here, as in other parts of North-East Rhodesia, took quinine daily, as a preventive against the prevailing malaria. We were told that before this custom had been introduced by the senior medical officer, the mortality from this fever had been high.



The White Fathers' Church at Mua.

[See p. 62.]





## Fort Jameson to Nawalia

The African Lakes Company, who had fitted us out at Blantyre, have here one of their principal branches, including a bank, and do a considerable trade. The usual trade route from this part of North-East Rhodesia, both for export and import, is through Portuguese territory to Tete on the Zambesi, a disagreeable, waterless march of some twenty days, and thence by steamer to Chinde. This route is closed for three months or so in the year, owing to the stoppage of navigation for want of water. It was closed at the time of our arrival, and would not, we were told, re-open before January, when the heavy rains would have refilled the river. Even so, however, our Nyasaland heads, which we left at Fort Jameson in October for despatch to England, reached Messrs. Rowland Ward in safety, and were mounted and on the walls of our rooms at home before the heads we left at the railhead at Broken Hill on the 9th of December reached England.

Saturday was of necessity devoted to business. Our first duty was to pay off our Nyasaland boys, the majority of whom had elected to return to their homes. I was sorry to part with my willing machilla team: we had always been on the best of terms. A tramp through North-East Rhodesia appears, however, to be anything but an enticing prospect to a Nyasaland native; it is to him a foreign country, with a strange language, a strange climate and strange diseases, notably the kufu bug fever, which is unknown in the Zomba and Blantyre districts. He also has the idea that he will not get

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

the same justice out of his own country as in it; and however this may be, it is perhaps natural that local officials should have more sympathy for their own people than for strangers.

Immediately after breakfast we proceeded to the African Lakes Company's store, and, assisted and financed by the courteous and obliging manager, we started paying off the men. Headed by the machilla teams, each man came up in turn to receive the balance of pay due to him, after the advances he had received *en route* had been deducted. An interpreter was present to explain the accounts, but there were no disputes. The unspoilt African native is very honest in matters of this sort, and is able to recollect perfectly such sums as may have been given him. After all had received their pay they were again paraded to be given three weeks' "posho" for their return journey; this done, their "backsheesh" was handed to them. An honorarium for work well done, in addition to the stipulated wage, is an excellent institution, and much appreciated; it encourages zeal and enables good men to be distinguished from bad ones. More or less trivial offences, which it is unwise entirely to overlook, are bound to arise from time to time in a large caravan. A fine as punishment is impossible to recover at the time the offence is committed, and to do so at the end of a journey from wages earned during its course is unfair as well as illegal; whereas "backsheesh," being purely a voluntary present, is a suitable medium for the purpose.

## Fort Jameson to Nawalía

So soon as all the men were paid off I had to purchase fresh stores, give the servants such advances as they required, and settle our banking account.

Hitherto we had paid the "posho" in cash; for the future it was to be paid in the so-called cloth or calico, the recognized currency of the country, and this had to be purchased. Two yards per man per week was the allowance. We took with us four hundred yards in two bales, making two loads, at a total cost of £5.

The African Lakes Co. had collected men for us; but our arrival having been delayed ten days, they had been obliged to employ them elsewhere. As we were anxious to get on, time being short, the friendly assistance of the official transport authority had become essential. Accordingly A—— went to the Government offices to see about engaging fresh machilla teams and porters.

The morning had been a busy one, and we were not sorry when the station twelve o'clock gun announced the approach of lunch time. We had now to decide upon our plans. The rainy season—so we were told—commences as a rule towards the middle of November. The early rains are usually light, and do not impede travelling. Heavy rains set in about the middle of December, and after their advent the unhealthiness of the climate increases, and the flooded rivers and muddy, slippery tracks make travelling difficult. We were therefore advised to be clear of the country by the end of January at the latest.

We had decided to return to Europe by the

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

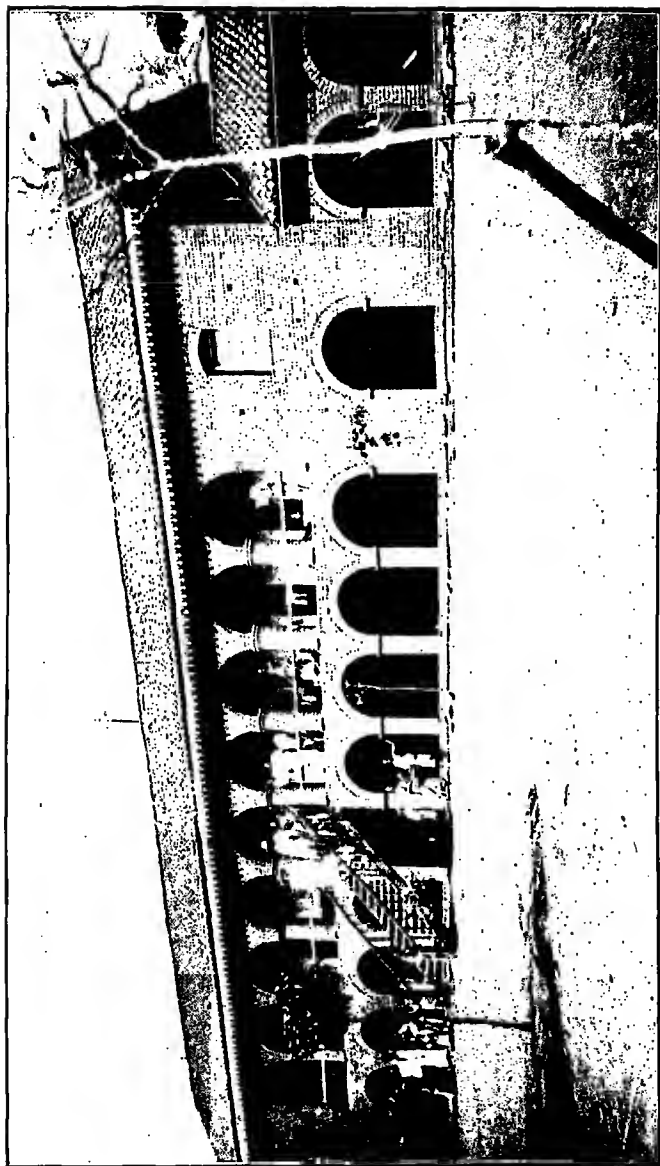
East Coast route from Beira. At that time the only passenger service along this coast was that of the D.O.A. Line, which runs a service of excellent mail-boats every three weeks. We found boats left Beira on the 19th December and on the 14th January; and all things considered, the former date appeared to be the best.

To get from Broken Hill to Beira—allowing for two days at the Victoria Falls on the Zambesi and a night or so at Salisbury or Buluwayo—would take at least ten days; and as trains leave Broken Hill for the south every Wednesday, the 9th December was settled upon as a suitable day for our departure from there. It was now the 19th October; therefore seven weeks were at our disposal.

We might return to Nyasaland for a fortnight's shoot and look for eland and elephant in the highlands near Fort Manning, and then proceed by the shortest route to Broken Hill. That we did not decide on this course was because the prospect of a three weeks' trek through such a hot, waterless, and gameless country as that between Fort Jameson and Broken Hill was uninviting.

Instead, we chose a circular route *via* Mpika, being encouraged by the hope of meeting game in the Luangwa valley and the Muchinga range.<sup>1</sup> As matters turned out, perhaps we should have done better if we had chosen the first route, for we should have been saved the full Rhodesian licence of £25,

<sup>1</sup> Muchinga range must not be confused with the Mchinji hills, forming the boundary line between Nyasaland and North-East Rhodesia.



Mission House at Mua.

[See p. 62.]



## Fort Jameson to Nawalía

and would have been spared the worries and anxieties consequent on the too hurried, devious tour we followed. But it is very easy to be wise after the event.

That evening Mrs. Beaufort gave a dinner-party, and we had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Wallace, the wife of the Administrator (who was away), and also various heads of the North-East Rhodesian Government.

On Sunday we attended divine service in the local church, and were glad of a day of rest. We lunched with Mrs. Wallace at Government House, a comfortable building facing a large open grass plain, on which a number of golden-crested cranes were strutting about. These birds were in complete liberty and very fairly tame. They flew away occasionally, but always returned. This reminds me that once in Nyasaland my boys brought me a nestful of unfledged little birds and wanted me to feed my eagle with them, which I refused to do. These nestlings were small cranes, and two lived for a few days; I might possibly have reared them, only, unfortunately, one day I gave them hard-boiled egg mixed with native flour; this food was too dry and disagreed. They travelled with me in the machilla, and at night the small basket that made their nest was placed inside my mosquito curtain. What would have happened when their legs and beaks got too long for the basket I do not know.

Monday morning there was again much to be done, as we hoped to make a start in the afternoon. The shooting licence had to be procured and import



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

duties on guns and ammunition paid, stores repacked, loads rearranged, heads handed to the African Lakes Co. for despatch to England, and the portmanteau containing our civilized clothes packed for forwarding direct to Broken Hill. The vicissitudes that overtook this same portmanteau will be recounted later on.

Of our Nyasaland boys the following only were left:—John, the headman; Franco, our invaluable personal servant; Moffat, the cook; Laban, his assistant; “Breeches,” whose real name was Mauridi; Saidi, gun-bearer and head shikari; and four porters, Maso, Mgombo, Roberti, and Cullilombe. Maso and Mgombo were promoted to my machilla team, while the other two were taken on as gun-bearers.

That morning the servants had plenty to do packing and arranging our goods. Unfortunately they were disorganized by the changes in the caravan and the sudden break in their usual routine, so that most of them were seized with a severe attack of home-sickness, and some firmness was required in dealing with them.

“Cooky” turned up in a pair of check trousers, which altered his appearance considerably; and as he was inclined to be impertinent, I remarked to John that Moffat had changed his manners along with his trousers.

By ignoring him utterly he got to understand he was in disgrace, and so became more subdued. Moffat was really a most excellent fellow in every respect, but the clothes and the cessation from work

## Fort Jameson to Nawalia

were temporarily too much for him. So soon as he returned to his ordinary garments and daily avocations he again became the best of cooks and servants.

The black man is essentially vain. There can be no doubt that the wearing of European clothes in his own hot climate has an extraordinary and deteriorating effect upon his mind. Dressed up in the cast-off clothes of his master, or the shoddy garments of the native store, he really thinks he impersonates and is on a level with a white man.

It is a great pity stringent rules are not made to prevent natives from apeing the white man's dress, especially in a young colony. The "boys" hanging about large towns in Rhodesia and South Africa are disgusting objects, with dirty tweed clothes and greasy caps and hats. The native in his simple cotton knickers, worn with or without a washing vest or neatly made linen jacket, takes a pride in being clean, which he certainly cannot be when he wears the dirty cast-off tweed clothes of Europeans.

Cecil Rhodes once said: "I do not want the natives to ape European dress or cover themselves with a veneer of sanctity. I want them to learn to work, to feed and clothe themselves decently, to show some concern for each other's welfare," and he added, in his far-seeing way, "and ultimately come into affairs."

A few new porters turned up in the morning, and more just after lunch. They were at once sorted out, the best being taken for the machilla teams, for which there is always competition, as it

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is considered a superior kind of work to that of an ordinary porter.

By 2 P.M. all was ready. But just as John was receiving his final instructions as to the halting place—a stream about six miles from Fort Jameson on the northern road—he received a telegram from Blantyre to say that his brother was dead, and asking him to return to wind up the estate. John collapsed and lost his wits at once—wits always a little apt to go at the time of a fresh start. A move had to be made, so there was nothing for it but to explain to him in clear but forcible language that this was no time for sorrow, that work was now his portion, and that the winding up of the estate could perfectly well await his return from Broken Hill. Franco was put in temporary charge of him, and he was started off with his carriers.

They had hardly got under way when a fresh and sturdier-looking lot of porters turned up—a further testimony, had one been wanted, to the excellence of the local transport arrangements. These men were sent on after the caravan with a message to John to select the best of the whole contingent and return the surplus to Fort Jameson. We have reason to fear, however, that his grief prevented him coping with the situation to the best advantage, and that in many instances the worst, and not the best, men were retained.

At 5 P.M. we took leave of our kind hosts and started on our way. The road, after passing through the town, ran almost immediately into the small acacia forest, which we practically did not

## Fort Jameson to Nawalia

quit during the whole of the remainder of our journey to Broken Hill. We passed one or two prosperous looking farms in clearings and a bungalow called "The Retreat," used by the Beauforts as a week-end resort. Our machilla teams, considering that they were new to their work, did extremely well. The pace was at first rather slower than that which we had been accustomed to, but this was due to our own instructions, given with a view to avoiding falls. We were always somewhat anxious for a day or so when travelling with a new team, as a fall would not only result in an unpleasant jolt, but might also very probably bring with it a blow on the head from one of the poles on which the machilla is slung.

Experience showed us, however, that with a team of four there was but little real danger of an accident. The boys are very sure-footed, so that during the whole of our journey neither of us had a fall, and only on one or two occasions, when the roads were very slippery after heavy rain, had we even a man down.

We reached our new camp just before sunset, to find everything much as usual, although John was in too despondent a condition to instruct the porters where to put their loads, and the tent was consequently in some confusion, the other servants not having entirely recovered from their rest.

The only incident that broke the usual peaceful tenor of our evening—a repose which, on this occasion, contrasted with the comparative bustle of Fort Jameson—was an extraordinary bubbling noise, which sounded as if all the kitchen kettles were

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boiling together. Not being able to understand the sound, we called to Franco, who explained to us that this was John's method of conducting his lamentations. At the risk of being brutal we had to ask him to go a little farther off. Our sympathy with him in his sorrow had been somewhat lessened by hearing from Franco that the brother was old, had been ailing for many years, and that his death had long been expected.

The day after leaving Fort Jameson we had intended marching to Kanyindula—the usual stage—a distance of about twenty miles; but, as is often the case with a fresh lot of men, we were late in getting under way. After travelling rather less than ten miles we left the high road to collect and rest the caravan in the dry bed of the Sandili river, where water-holes were reported. When we got there we found that there was only one hole which still had water in it, and as the process of drawing it was slow we decided that we had better encamp, although only about half the distance we had hoped to cover. The day was very hot, the sun getting high, the machilla men, new to their work, were tired, and the porters exhausted from heat and want of water. One man had a slight fit.

We selected an island in the dry bed of the river, and pitched our tent under the shade of a big tree. Among the dried leaves on the ground round about the tree were a number of pods, which the men fortunately recognized as the much dreaded bean of the Macuna creeper.<sup>1</sup> We had them

<sup>1</sup> See *British Central Africa* (Sir H. Johnston), p. 220.

## Fort Jameson to Nawalia

gathered up one by one—the men using two sticks as pinchers—and burned. The minute hairs on these pods set up a dreadful irritation if they get upon one's flesh, and cause a rash which takes some time to allay. The natives call this plant "moto," which means hot or fire. We had been warned of it in Nyasaland, but this was our first experience of the Macuna creeper.

I spent the late afternoon in getting the names of our new machilla boys and porters, and entering them by messes in my book. As a rule the machilla teams had their own mess, and the porters messed according to the villages from which they were drawn.

The night was cool, which refreshed all hands. We started before dawn next day, so as to avoid marching in the heat as much as possible. A—— and I walked until the light became stronger and the path better defined, and then getting into our machillas we slept well for some miles. Our march proved easy, and we reached Kanyindula about breakfast-time. Here we decided to encamp, as the next water was at least ten miles further on, and the day promised to be hot. We had a most unpleasant camp; the sun beating down on the bare fields made the air very hot, and a sultry, boisterous wind that sprang up about noon intensified our discomfort. A high wind is always undesirable in a tent, as there is no getting away from it.

That evening A—— went out and saw some kudu cows and young bulls, but as there was no old bull with the herd he did not shoot.

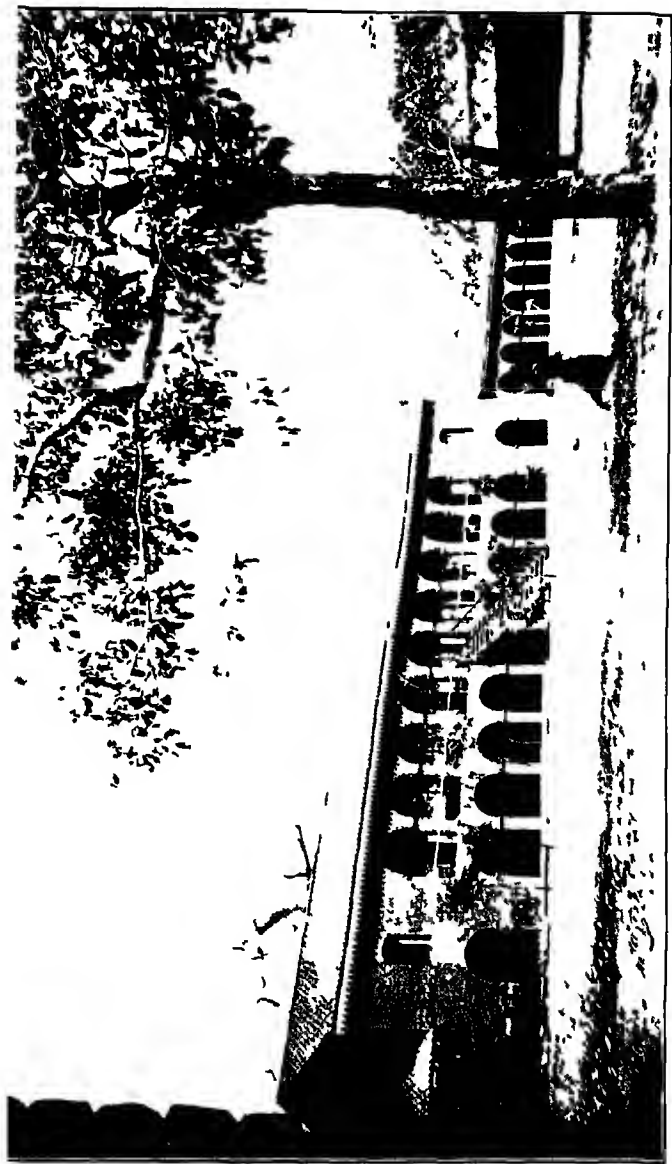
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At dawn next day we were again on the road, following a good path through the forest. Fine clumps of bamboos were passed, though dry and not in their beauty. Large ant-heaps covered with vegetation were also frequently met with.

We crossed the fresh spoor of a herd of elephant that had travelled at right angles to the direction we were taking, but heard afterwards that they were all cows.

After three hours' travel we halted for breakfast at Chinunda's village, an altitude of two thousand feet. Here the route to Mpika leaves the northern road, and following roughly the course of the Rakasi river, takes a north-westerly direction, and descends at a moderate gradient through forest-clad hills to the Luangwa valley. The village chief and a local hunter came to interview us, and as they reported kudu in the immediate vicinity, we decided to encamp. Unfortunately the day proved hot, and the boisterous wind, which as usual rose about noon, made our encampment near the village gardens very uncomfortable. In the afternoon A—— went to look for the kudu, and sighted a herd of cows but no bulls. Next morning he was off again before dawn, but returned after a long tramp with no better luck.

Kudu bulls are solitary animals, and always difficult to find; at the same time, judging from the number of cows and young bulls seen, shootable bulls were unusually scarce. A—— attributed this shortage to the fact that in North-East Rhodesia no limit is put to the number of kudu that may



Mission House (another view), Mua.

[See p 62





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be killed on the licence. It is a pity, when one considers the beauty of the animal and its comparative rarity.

In order to avoid wasting a whole day we determined to march that afternoon. The caravan started at 2.30 P.M., and we followed an hour later; but even then the sun was still intensely hot, and as the roof of my machilla and my sun-hat combined did not seem sufficient protection, I held up an umbrella in addition. Our road was down-hill all the way, the descent into the somewhat dreaded Luangwa basin having commenced.

Soon after dark we came up with the caravan, which had halted in the forest just clear of the high road. Our servants were hard at work pitching the tents, but as yet nothing had been unpacked, and it took us some little time to settle down. An arrival after dark invariably spells confusion and delay. We were both hot, tired, and thirsty, not to say cross, and glad of our dinner when it eventually arrived.

We resolved to make a double march next day, as no more shooting was to be expected until we reached the Luangwa river. Dawn saw us on the road, and after covering about fifteen miles through dense forest, descending all the way, we arrived about 10 A.M. at Chimanya's village on the Rakasi, a dry river bed with a few water-holes here and there. After purchasing from the villagers some flour for the men, and a goat and some pigeons for ourselves, we sent the caravan on to Kambiris village, where we proposed halting for the night,

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keeping with us only a tent, its carriers, and our personal servants.

We had our tent pitched under a large tree growing on the river bank, and remained in it during the heat of the day, starting again about 5 P.M. The road proved rough and hilly, and longer than we had expected, and as a zebra A—— shot delayed us, we did not reach our camp near Kambwiri until 9 P.M. The night was very dark, and our only light was the camp lantern and "Cooky's" fire. We had to dispense with our own camp fire, as the wood supply in the immediate neighbourhood was short.

Next morning Kambiri, the chief, a small, well-dressed young man, came to call, accompanied by his court, which included four pretty wives.

It now appeared that he, John, and Moffat were old friends, and when he took his departure the two latter asked leave to spend the day with him. In a short time others turned up with the same request, "Breeches" in white duck trousers, and all in their best clothes, so that by degrees the great majority of our men disappeared, and the sounds of revelry from the village disclosed the fact that a pombe drink was in progress.

We had told John that we intended to march that afternoon, and that he was to be back by 3 P.M. to strike the tents and pack the baggage; but when the hour arrived, neither he nor any of those who had gone to the village were forthcoming, and several messengers had to be sent to fetch them back. John himself was in a state of exhilaration.

## Fort Jameson to Nawalía

Many others, including most of the servants, were in the sulky stage, and so generally disinclined to move that it would probably have been wiser for us to have accepted the situation and to have remained. However, we were anxious to be off. The place was very hot, and as it was evidently desirable to put a distance between the village and ourselves, we insisted, and by 5 P.M. got everyone under way.

A night march is apt to be a dangerous experiment, and this one proved no exception to the rule. As a precaution A—— acted as rear-guard, and it was soon apparent to him that all was not well. "Cooky," who should have been in front, and John, who ought to have followed the last porter, lagged far behind, and had to be sent for two or three times. The porters constantly sat down, and evidently felt the heat, which was certainly very great, so that slow progress was made. Just after dark we reached the dry bed of a stream, where water was expected; all stopped, and many of the men threw down their loads and disappeared in the bush. Fortunately, John had by this time got over the worst of his "drunk," and being doubtless penitent, disappeared after the fugitives, and by degrees secured them. A—— explained to the men that it was impossible to remain where we were, and that it was in their own interests to hurry on to the nearest water, which we hoped was not far off. John showed some energy, "Cooky" hustled on ahead, and we were soon under way again, making good progress, though the night was very dark

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and the road seemed endless. About 9 P.M. we suddenly quitted the forest and entered what appeared to be an open plain, and as the guide told us that there was water and a village in the immediate neighbourhood, we sent on ahead to stop the porters. Soon afterwards "Cooky" could be heard shouting from what was apparently the head of the caravan, and A—— went forward to reconnoitre, but as in two or three minutes he found himself in a marsh with reeds over his head, he declined to proceed, and returning, ordered the tents to be pitched where we had originally stopped. Confusion then reigned supreme. Many of the most indispensable loads were found to be missing, and to make matters worse the invaluable Franco had run a thorn into his foot, and could hardly put it to the ground. "All's well that ends well." The missing porters had merely followed "Cooky" across what subsequently turned out to be the Rukususi River, to a comfortable village on the far bank, and after much shouting and lighting of fires, were all retrieved. The tents were pitched by the light of torches made from dried mealie stalks, and by 10 P.M. we were eating a rather scratch dinner, and soon afterwards were safely in bed and asleep.

Next morning struck us as cold and damp, and we found the camping place had been ill chosen in the dark, and was too near the marshy river. The crossing, however, which had appeared risky the night before, was found to be easy by daylight. A—— went across to reconnoitre, chose a pleasant camping ground in the forest, a short distance from

## Fort Jameson to Nawalia

the river, and as further night operations were manifestly undesirable, we determined to remain there for twenty-four hours. In the evening A—— secured a water-buck and some guinea-fowl, as our meat was running short.

When travelling with porters in really hot weather a plentiful supply of water every hour is a necessity. So long as you have it no trouble need be anticipated; but if the men with loads have to march without it for more than about two hours you may look out for squalls.

The road to Mpika is well watered throughout, if we except the first stage—twenty miles or so—which was very dry when we passed along it. As far as Chinunda village certainly, and I think as far as Kambwiri, the water was brackish, so that some of our men suffered severely, great calls being made on the chlorodyne bottle. Poor old Saidi, whose appetite was large, and who particularly disliked putting on the muzzle, contracted dysentery, which nearly culminated in a serious illness after leaving Mpika.

The Rukususi, which we had reached, and from now onwards the water was excellent.

Next day, the 27th October, we marched to the ill-omened valley of the Luangwa and crossed that river at a place called Luambe, the altitude being here two thousand feet. We were agreeably surprised to find this one of the pleasantest marches we had during our tour; the road was smooth and level, the forest open with tall handsome trees, and the air cool and pleasant. A good deal of

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game was seen along the route, a circumstance which always adds interest to a march, and A—— secured a fine roan antelope.

By 11 A.M. we reached the river, which at this point is about three hundred yards broad. There was plenty of water, rippling cool and pleasant in the sunlight, and several natives fishing in their primitive fashion. Two or three easily fordable channels between sand-banks enabled us to cross without difficulty, but close to the right bank the water was up to the men's middles, and the current strong. This bank was so high and steep that we had to get out of our machillas and scramble up as best we could.

We proceeded a hundred yards or so inland, and selected a suitable spot for our camp under a group of fine baobab trees, but the grass was high and coarse. Before pitching the tents, it had to be burnt, with the result that the ground was more or less blackened by the fire, and an unpicturesque feature introduced into otherwise charming surroundings.

In the afternoon A—— went off inland through the forest to a marsh or backwater, in which there were a number of rough wicker fish traps stretching right across the stream, showing that the place was a favourite fishing-ground. The jungle on the banks was very thick. He shot a large goose, which was a welcome addition to our larder, and saw a number of impala, locally known as iswalah, but no other game.

It was now the eighth day since our departure from Fort Jameson, and "posho" at the rate of

## Fort Jameson to Nawalia

two yards of calico per man was due. We had with us, of course, the official list; but in this the men were not classified according to their duties and mess, so I had first of all to enter the names in my register, arranging the machilla boys by teams and the porters by villages. After this, John measured out the calico. Each man was called up in turn, handed a length of cloth, and dismissed. Frequently two or three men would come up together and ask for their combined portions in one length. When they did this it was usually to enable one of their number to make use of the piece for a new "dotee."

Our Blantyre boys and the servants took their "posho" in money.

We dined well, some excellent fish having been brought us by the fishermen. The evening was cool and pleasant, the neighbourhood of the river rendering the heat far less trying than it had been at the foot of the hills. Night hid the blackened appearance caused by the burnt grass around the tents; and the tall trees, their trunks lit up by the fires, stood out in bold relief against the dark background of the forest, and gave a most picturesque appearance to our surroundings. To have remained a day or so in this pleasing camp would have been very pleasant, but unfortunately we had no time to spare, so word was given to go forward.

We reached Nawalia after an uneventful march. After crossing the Luangwa River the road takes a more westerly direction than heretofore, and runs with little rise along the course of the Nyamadzi river to the foot of the Muchinga range.



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Nawalia had recently been a considerable station, but all was now deserted, and we had some difficulty in selecting a camping ground. The buildings of the disused boma stood on a steep rocky hill overlooking the right bank of the river (Nyamadzi), and under normal circumstances we should certainly have investigated them with a view to temporary occupation, but in this part of the world disused houses means kufu bug.

The right bank, on which we were, was grass grown, covered with scrub, and devoid of shade. Consequently, after some hunting about in the hot sun we crossed the river to the left bank, along which there was cultivation, and had our tents pitched under a big sausage tree standing a short distance back from the river bank. The river itself, a hundred yards or so broad, looked pleasant enough, the clear cold water running over a hard, sandy bottom. The banks were high and steep, and so thickly covered with reeds and rushes that we were a bit anxious about mosquitoes. However, we were fortunate, and passed an untroubled night.

The remainder of the day was rather uncomfortable, as the place was hot and the strong wind made it dusty. In the evening A—— went along the river in search of game, but only saw a few iswalah running about in the thick scrub.

Under the boma on the left bank was the grave of an Englishman, a Mr. Jocelin, who had been killed elephant hunting about three years before. John declared that he was with him at the time of the accident. The grave, which was marked by a



On the Steps of the Mission Church, Mua.

[See p. 62.]



## Fort Jameson to Nawalía

cross and cairn of stones, was in good order, and surrounded by a railing.

It was either at this camp or the next that a native came, suffering from wounds inflicted by a leopard that had attacked him when cutting grass. I suppose the man must have defended himself with the knife or spear he had in his hand. History does not relate whether he killed the leopard.

In some parts leopards are very bold. Not far from Fort Jameson, on two occasions, a leopard had been reported to have carried off a small boy who tended goats.

I never encountered any dangerous wild animals when by myself; but two acquaintances of mine related to me their adventures. One, a very great traveller, was strolling outside the camp in the early morning when she suddenly faced a lion, and on another occasion a leopard. She remained perfectly motionless and gazed at the animal, who after a few moments slunk away. Her headman told her that if she had made a movement the animal would have sprung upon her. As it was, it could not make her out. The other, a sportswoman, was stalking a small buck when she suddenly saw a leopard in front. She, too, remained perfectly still, but called to her servant, who was a little way off. Before he could join her the leopard had gone. There is some comfort in the knowledge that dangerous wild animals are as much afraid of you as you are of them, and will always avoid attacking a man unless in self-defence, or in straits for food.

## CHAPTER XII.

KAZEMBE TO MPIKA—ROBERTI'S INVENTIVE MOOD—

THE TSETSE FLY.

DAWN next morning saw us on the road to Kazembe. After re-crossing the river we had first to mount the steep and rocky sides of the boma hill, which were still refracting the heat absorbed from the previous day's sun. I made my machilla boys turn round and carry me uphill backwards, which is much the best and easiest way to travel when the road is steep. At the top there was a fine view of the winding river. The beautiful green banks and stretches of yellow sandbank contrasted well with the glistening water in the early morning light.

The road left the river and ran along a high rocky ridge bordered by scrub, very dry and uninteresting, for about two hours' march, after which it descended and again approached the river bank. We breakfasted in a deep dry water course, whose tree-grown banks gave us good shelter from the sun. During breakfast Roberti, who was evidently in an inventive mood, reported iswalah. A—— dashed off, but after a rough, hot walk saw nothing more interesting than monkeys. Roberti was admonished. After breakfast the day grew very hot, and the road through the dry forest seemed interminable. Our

## Kazembe to Mpika

journey was, however, suddenly enlivened by the sight of a herd of roan antelope moving through the open bush not far from the road, and jumping out of his machilla, A—— shot one of them before it was aware of our presence.

To save time we decided to send back for the meat from our next camp, which we hoped was not far off, and Roberti and another man were left to guard it.

Very hot and tired we reached the junction of the two rivers near Kazembe village shortly after the caravan, which had been sent on ahead at the breakfast halt. The near bank was high and free from grass or rushes, so orders were given to pitch the tents on the edge overlooking the river. Unfortunately, John had already crossed over to seek a camping ground closer to the village on the far side. We could see him, with some of the porters, wandering about in a clearing. Ten or fifteen minutes were wasted in retrieving him, and by the time he got back neither white nor black tempers were at their best.

Groups of fine looking natives carrying red and white blankets had passed us on the road. These men were recruits for the Johannesburg mines on their way to Fort Jameson to undergo the medical test. If approved of they would then proceed *via* the Zambesi River, Chinde, and Delagoa Bay to the Transvaal. A party of these natives who were resting by the river-side at the time of our arrival volunteered, in exchange for some meat, to go and fetch the roan antelope which had been left behind

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

in Roberti's charge, thereby earning the gratitude of our tired porters.

In the afternoon the village chief, an important looking old man in a long black calico robe, called on us, and brought flour and eggs, receiving in exchange a present of meat and calico. Elephants are often to be met in the neighbourhood of Kazembe, but the chief reported that they were now on the Nyamadzi River, and advised us to go after them; want of time, not to speak of the heat, prevented this. He also told us that there was game across the river a few miles off. Unfortunately, it was too late to go any distance, therefore A—— had to content himself with a walk along the river bank. The altitude of the place was about two thousand one hundred and fifty feet, and it was very hot—quite 100° F. in the shade.

That evening, as the meat was being prepared for distribution, it appeared to us that a great deal of talk was going on, and that Roberti was specially eloquent. We called up John to inquire what it was all about. John reported that Roberti, while waiting for the porters, had left the dead roan and gone to the river to get a drink, and that while he was down by the water he had seen both eland and kudu. Now kudu in that neighbourhood were extremely improbable, and Roberti was reminded of the monkey story; at the same time, eland were quite possible, and A—— was anxious to get an eland; but being well aware of Roberti's lively imagination, he hesitated to believe his report. The possibility of getting eland, however, tempted



The White Fathers' Field of Wheat, Mua.

[See p. 63.]





## Kazembe to Mpika

A—— greatly, so that a little later he sent for old Saidi, told him to get hold of Roberti quietly and question him. This Saidi did, and returning later, reported that as Roberti stuck to his story there might be something in it. In consequence a halt was ordered for the morrow, and instructions given for an early start after the eland.

Next morning A—— was off before dawn, and after an hour and three-quarters' jolt in his machilla he reached the spot where the roan had been killed on the previous day, got out and told Roberti to point out the exact direction he had taken in going down to the river to get water. Roberti seemed vague, but was told to show the way, and the party started off. As luck would have it, they soon struck some roan, and A—— might have had a shot but refrained, to Roberti's evident disappointment. On they went, but the river seemed a long way off. Roberti got vaguer and vaguer, and at last confessed that he had made a little mistake. Had a suitable instrument been handy, poor Roberti would probably have suffered *in situ*, but fortunately for him there was none to hand. He was told, however, that the evil hour was merely postponed until after his return to camp, and that "Breeches," as a strong man, would be called upon to wield the rod, so that Roberti's usually sunny countenance was a good deal overcast, and he trotted along behind in a sorrowful and penitent mood. A native is like a child, and quite ready to acknowledge and ask pardon for his fault when found out. The party soon after struck the river, and returned homewards along its bank, see-

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

ing quite a number of puku and iswalah *en route*. One of the former, a buck, and the first we met with since leaving the Bua, was shot.

We thought that the whole affair was a plot of John's to get a quiet day in camp, but on investigation Roberti failed to implicate John in any way, and confessed that he had only invented the story to make fun of him, and had not intended that we should hear of it. In the end, as the whole transaction was rather quaint, Roberti got off with a caution, but he was advised not to play the funny man again.

In the morning, soon after A's—— departure, I had the camp shifted a few hundred yards, and the tent pitched under the shade of a giant fig-tree—a far pleasanter situation than the previous one on the river bank. In the early afternoon A—— started off again with the chief as guide and got a fine roan, seeing other game as well. My diary has the entry, "a very hot night."

Next day we were to march to Ndombo, and as game was reported on the left bank of the Nyamadzi river, we decided to send the caravan by the road and make a *détour* ourselves. The river had to be crossed more than once, a difficult achievement, owing to the dense vegetation on its banks, so thick in places that we had to leave our machillas and crawl through the bush as best we could, the machillas being pushed after us. The spoor of rhinoceros was seen, and we passed the evidently only recently vacated home of one of them. We expected to see his ugly face waiting for us round every corner, so the heavy rifle was got ready,

## Kazembe to Mpika

but though the spoor was followed some way, the beast never appeared.

There were reported to be quite a number of rhinoceros in the foothills, and we saw spoor on several occasions, but never an animal. Local hunters told us that these Rhodesian rhinoceros had small horns and were so shy that two or three hours' tracking was as a rule necessary to get up with them. This is very different to British East Africa, where, in the rhinoceros districts, the sight of an unwieldy black form scratching its back under a thorn tree and the sound of his steam-engine-like whistle are a common occurrence. As only two are allowed to be killed, their constant presence is not only bad for stalking other game, but is also apt to prove trying to the nerves.

Once away from the river banks we got into the usual dry bush, and the morning became extremely hot. Whilst looking about for a shady place for breakfast a swarm of small black midge flies attacked us, and we anticipated a bad time, but somehow managed to get quit of them.

On this march the tsetse-fly (*glossina morsitans*) was very troublesome. We had been plagued with it all through the valley, but to-day the tsetse seemed unusually aggressive, so that my fly whisk had to be continually moving; and if I happened to close my eyes, a sharp prick woke me up at once. The irritation caused by the bite of this insect is considerable, and heats the blood, but fortunately it is not otherwise harmful to human beings. To domestic animals, however—the goat alone appears immune—

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

a tsetse bite is fatal, producing a rot which causes death. It is not this variety of tsetse, but *glossina palpalis*, that habitually carries the sleeping sickness germ. It has been ascertained—so we were told on the voyage home by a doctor who had been for sometime studying sleeping sickness—that *glossina morsitans* and the ordinary mosquito can also carry the poison. We gathered, however, that they both retain the infection for a comparatively short time.<sup>1</sup>

One curious peculiarity about the tsetse is the manner in which it will entirely abandon a district in which it has once been prevalent. Mr. Selous gives several instances of this in his works. The reason for migration is a disputed point. The presence of the tsetse is attributed by some to the vicinity of certain kinds of game, and it is said that if the game left the “fly” would go with it. Whatever the truth of this theory may be, it is not one that a sportsman would wish to encourage, and it can hardly be applicable to North-East Rhodesia, where there was not a sufficiency of game to attract the enormous quantity of “fly” we at times encountered.

There is one point, and one only, to be said in favour of *glossina morsitans*, and that is that it goes to bed at night. This peculiarity frequently enables valuable cattle to be driven with safety through the “fly” belts, which are well known.

<sup>1</sup> Quite recently sleeping sickness has appeared in the Luangwa Valley. It has not yet been fully determined what insect is the carrying agent. A Commission is being sent out by the Chartered Company to investigate.

## Kazembe to Mpika

On the road we saw a number of iswalah, or impala—beautiful, deer-like antelope with shiny red coats—they are very good to eat. When surprised, they are said to be extraordinary “leapers,” though I myself never saw them do anything more than gallop off. Compared with the East African variety, these North-East Rhodesian impala, though of much the same size and colour, carry very poor heads, consequently A—— only shot them when we were in want of meat.

We were a very long time reaching Ndombo, not getting in till near noon, and were glad to find our tents pitched in a pleasant spot on the high bank overlooking the river. Notwithstanding a nice wind, the day was intensely hot, and I was unable to unpack or do anything but rest until sundown.

A black hunter living in Ndombo village, who had been recommended to us, promised us buffalo if we would move about a day's march eastward of the road, and A—— would much have liked to have gone; but the heat, combined with the unreliability of native promises, decided us to push on. We were still hoping for great things on the Muchinga plateau.

In the evening A—— went out and shot a bushbuck, a beautiful little animal standing about twenty-seven inches high, with a grey, spotted skin and no stripes. The beast was lighter in colour and had a finer, smaller head than is usual in the bushbuck tribe. This colouring may have been due to the summer coat he carried, or the hot

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

climate of the Luangwa valley may have evolved a slightly different variety.

Next morning saw us early on the road. We passed through a very "gamey" country, with large, attractive-looking dambos, but saw only a few zebra. These dambos—in which coarse grass was growing—were nearly always dry; but in the centre, where the water-course should be, were fragrant green weeds growing thickly. As the season advanced flowers appeared in these open spaces. In the higher altitudes numbers of red-hot poker plants (*tritoma*) were growing; wild and uncultivated, they are smaller than those grown in our English gardens. Later, amid the grass in the Wulangulu hills, delicate little blue flowers appeared, but they were too fragile to pluck, dying before we arrived in camp.

We had hoped to reach the Muchinga foothills in the morning, and to commence our climb in the afternoon, after the great heat was over; but about 10 A.M. we arrived at the point where the Nyamadzi river diverged from our path, and ascertained that the foothills were at least two hours' march further on, and that as there was no water there it would be impossible to camp.

To climb the whole mountain in the scorching midday sun was out of the question; there was nothing to be done but to halt. Some difficulty arose in finding a suitable place for our camp, as the trees were poor and much of the grass unburnt. One of the servants, going through the grass to reconnoitre a likely-looking sausage-tree, stumbled

## Kazembe to Mpika

on a large python and beat a hasty retreat. We settled down, however, at last; and notwithstanding the near neighbourhood of the river, passed what was probably the hottest day and night we had yet had. I had no thermometer with me, but I was told afterwards the temperature was probably  $108^{\circ}$  to  $112^{\circ}$  F. in the tent.

During the afternoon we received a kind note from Mr. Melland, the Mpika magistrate, to say that he had sent out to engage porters for us; but that as his labour market was somewhat depleted, there might be a delay in getting them. This was a severe blow to us, as the possibility of being stopped at Mpika had not entered into our calculations when at Fort Jameson. We had only engaged our Angonies to go as far as Mpika, the transport authorities having told us that there were always an abundance of good carriers in that district. As a way out of our dilemma, our porters—on the whole a very good lot—were sounded as to whether they would volunteer to go on with us to Broken Hill, but after some deliberation we received an unfavourable answer.

In the evening, A—— went along the river bank to look for game. There were old tracks of buffalo, rhino, and eland, but not a beast to be seen; the great heat and the “fly” had in all likelihood driven at least the larger animals to cooler and more restful quarters in the forest on the hills.

Dawn next morning saw us on the march. The foot of the Muchinga was reached in about an



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

hour and a half, and we at once commenced our climb, the altitude at the bottom being two thousand three hundred feet. Though steep in places and with a much longer ascent, the rise was far less perpendicular than that from Mua to the Dedza plateau in Nyasaland, and the calico sashes were not found really necessary, except just at first. After a steep pull of about one thousand feet on a winding track we came upon water and decided to halt for breakfast. It was fortunate we had provided ourselves with a change of clothes, for we were saturated with perspiration. A slight dip in the ground and a few rocks made a secluded dressing room for me.

After breakfast we were able to use our machillas, and continued mounting, with occasional depressions, through charming scenery, until, about noon—at an altitude of four thousand seven hundred feet—the summit was attained; and finding here a pleasant stream, we halted for lunch and a rest.

Breakfast time had not offered us much respite from the heat; but this spot, though the sun itself was hot, felt delightfully cool and pleasant, and the green vegetation was very satisfying to the eye. The hills and forests through which we had mounted were extremely pretty; and looking back at intervals, glorious views over the low country we had just quitted had been obtained.

Having now reached the plateau which forms the top of the Muchinga range—the highest point within three miles of Mpika is about five thousand



Women Pounding Corn at Mua.

[See p 63.]



## Kazembe to Mpika

feet—we congratulated ourselves on being safely out of the Luangwa valley, which had been so unfavourably reported upon. It had been hot, certainly, but no hotter than many of the places through which we had previously travelled. If our time had not been limited, or had there been any reason for it, we should not have hesitated remaining there, for we had enjoyed good health throughout.

Though not in great abundance, there was undoubtedly game. More animals were seen in the valley than in any other part of North-East Rhodesia, and this, notwithstanding the proximity of a much frequented road. "Fly" was certainly troublesome, but mosquitoes were mercifully few, probably owing to the dry season and the burnt grass. We used mosquito curtains, but so far as I can recollect, they were required more to keep off "fly" by day than mosquitoes by night.

I can imagine the valley being very unwholesome when drying up after the heavy rains—masses of high grass sheltering the mosquito—but I do not consider it so in October. The valley was well watered with nice clear running streams, so that I fancy its evil reputation—for we heard much in its disfavour from several reliable sources, notably in Nyasaland—arises from the broader and drier southern portion along which the post-road passes.

After a good rest we started again about 3 P.M. in pleasantly cool weather, everyone refreshed by

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

the change of temperature, and pushed on to within about five miles of Mpika, camping near a small river in a large open dambo. The country through which we passed was fairly open, and marshy in places, presenting all the aspect of ordinary upland scenery. The grass was green and the trees in leaf, spring being more advanced on the higher ground than in the plains, where the great heat had dried up everything.

While the tent was being pitched A——sighted some reedbuck, and shot one.

The following day, November 3rd, he left camp early to look for game; while I, after enjoying the luxury of a leisurely toilet, went on with the caravan to Mpika, arriving about 9 A.M.

Mpika, the head-quarters of a district, stands in a clearing surrounded by forest at an altitude of four thousand eight hundred feet or so. It consists of two or three bungalows belonging to the officials, the government office with a flagstaff in front of it, a small African Lakes Co.'s store and a native village. Mr. Melland, the magistrate, welcomed me most kindly, and after showing me the camping ground, took me to his house, a comfortably furnished bungalow full of delightful books. He had as companions two cats, three dogs, besides five kittens and the same number of pointer pups, all, with the exception of the pups, in possession of his sitting-room, where they found it convenient to come in and out of the window. Here A——joined me an hour or so later, and we lunched with Mr. Melland. Later in the day our Angonie porters were paid

## Kazembe to Mpika

off and given two yards of calico apiece as "posho." They started off at once on the first stage of their homeward march. We felt rather forlorn after their departure, as we were left with only our Nyasaland servants and boys, and, in addition, three Dedza carriers engaged at Fort Jameson, who had volunteered to go on with us to Broken Hill. They rejoiced in the names of John, Chinkondu, and Jim, and were as pleasant, useful lads as any in the caravan. The two former joined my machilla team, the latter carried the bedding bundle, which he assisted Franco to pack every morning.

It was hoped that our new carriers would turn up by nightfall, but as they failed to do so, Mr. Melland kindly arranged to take A—— out next morning after situtunga. We dined at his house, meeting Mr. Waterall, the assistant magistrate, and spent a pleasant evening.

The next morning A—— left with Mr. Melland and Mr. Waterall for the situtunga drive. They started at 10 A.M. for the large dambo through which the marshy channel of the upper Nyamadzi runs, commencing not very far from our last camping ground; they killed two bulls with inferior horns; no large bull was to be seen. As situtunga bush-buck (*Tragelophus shakei*) are rare and curious brutes, A—— was very anxious to secure a good specimen. These semi-aquatic animals live in the marshy beds of rivers, feeding on the tops of the papyrus reeds; they are reddish-brown in colour, with curious elongated cloven feet which enable them to run with ease through and over the reeds;

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

their gait on dry land is very ungainly, and they are comparatively slow movers.

In the meanwhile I enjoyed a thoroughly restful day in Mr. Melland's comfortable bungalow, revelling in the rare luxury of a well-furnished library.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### MPIKA TO KOPAS—OUR NEW MACHILLA TEAMS— TROUBLE WITH PORTERS—HOW LUGGAGE TRAVELS THROUGH CENTRAL AFRICA.

THE regular post road from Mpika to Broken Hill runs *via* Serenje and Mkushi, a twenty-one days' journey, and along it no shooting is to be expected. In order to enable us to see more of the country, and at the same time to procure some sport, Mr. Melland advised us to march westward along the Luatikila river as far as Kopas, and thence southwards, skirting Bangwelo and passing over the Wulangulu Hills to Mkushi and Broken Hill; and this plan we decided to adopt, as it would take us well out of the beaten track and along a road little travelled, which would doubtless offer many points of interest *en route*.

Eland were the beasts we were most anxious to secure. They had been recently reported in the neighbourhood of Kulukenia's village, some twenty miles or so to the westward of Mpika, so Mr. Melland suggested that, in order to avoid waste of time, we should march at once to Kulukenias and there await the arrival of our porters; and he most kindly supplied us with sufficient men from local sources to enable us to do this.



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

The morning was passed in considering our plans and route, and getting everything packed and in order for a move. About 2 P.M. the boys arrived. There was the usual confusion consequent upon a fresh start—John's wits were not at their best—but by degrees all were got underway.

We ourselves followed about 4 P.M. Almost immediately after leaving the station our route ran into the forest and was mostly downhill until we reached the marshy course of a branch of the Luatikila River. Here were puku in plenty running about on the grass and in among the reeds. Darkness was coming on, and a little anxiety as to the whereabouts of our camp was natural, the distance being much longer than the five miles or so we had been told to expect. However, after some winding about and uncertainty, we were glad to sight our tents and to find them already pitched in a suitable spot. Our scratch machilla teams had come along very well, considering; but John was full of complaints. He could not understand, apparently, why the majority of the porters were only temporary, and kept repeating, "Mwembe very bad boy." It appeared, subsequently, that he, as well as all the other Nyasaland boys, cordially disliked the Wawembe. This antagonistic feeling is doubtless the result of the constant tribal feuds and wars prior to the British occupation of the country. We should advise travellers following this route with a caravan, composed for the most part of Wawembe,<sup>1</sup> to secure

<sup>1</sup> Mwembe is used in the singular, and Awembe or Wawembe in the plural for the same tribe.

## Mpika to Kopas

a competent Mwembe headman to take entire charge of his own people. By so doing they would doubtless be spared many of the disagreeables we had to put up with.

Saidi, who had been ailing, turned out to be distinctly unwell and in considerable pain, the result of the attack of dysentery he had had in the Luangwa valley. We made him happy with opium pills and some arrowroot in which was a strong dose of brandy, and hoped that all would be well.

Next morning we started betimes, but only succeeded in getting as far as Mkombo's village by 11 A.M. As our objective, Kulukenas, was still some ten miles farther on, we decided to halt, and pitched our camp a short distance beyond the village, facing the bed of a stream (probably the Mukangwa) then dry, except the waterholes from which the villagers drew their water supply. Quitting the river immediately after starting, our route had run through dry forest and dambos, where no game was to be seen; but about half-way we crossed the spoor of a herd of eland.

Old Saidi was again very ill with dysentery while on the march. I gave him a strong dose of Eau des Carmes, which was the only remedy I had with me, and this warmed him up and pulled him round; but we had to leave him to come on in his own time, with Maso to look after him. Investigation showed that the brandy and arrowroot which had been given him the previous evening had done him so much good, that after taking it he indulged in a heavy meal of cassava root, much to John's indig-

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

nation, and contrary to his clearly expressed advice—at least so John said. As further indulgence in the pleasures of the table would probably have been the end of Saidi, we put him on a daily ration, first of brandy and arrowroot and then arrowroot alone, so as to gradually accustom him to his own porridge. John and Franco were detailed to watch him, and see that he did not eat anything else, more especially meat. He gradually improved under this treatment, but I do not think that he completely regained his strength during the remainder of the trip.

On the 7th November we marched to Kulukenas, arriving about 10 A.M. We noted the altitude there as four thousand four hundred feet. Notwithstanding that the chief had been sending in bitter complaints to the boma of the damage the eland were doing to his crops; on our arrival, with a view to exterminating them in his interest, he not only failed to express pleasure at our advent, but denied that there were any such beasts in the neighbourhood. This version was corroborated by our subsequent investigations, and it did not surprise us, so soon as we realized that all the village crops had been safely harvested, consequently there was nothing now to retain the herd. True, next day we struck the spoor of a single solitary bull, but he was the exception that proved the rule. In the evening some reedbuck, which came out into the dambo, close to our camp, furnished us with a supply of meat.

Our borrowed porters left us early on the morning of the 8th to return to Mpika, and we



John with Sable Antelope.

[See p. 69.]



## Mpíka to Kopas

were perforce obliged to halt until such time as our new supply reached us. As this was quite indefinite, we made ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit. An harbour was constructed, roofed with thick green boughs, in which to lunch and sit during the heat of the day. Some of the trees in the higher altitudes were beginning to come out.

A—— started off early in search of game, but saw none. After a long and uninteresting tramp he and his men were returning wearily homewards about 9 A.M., when suddenly they struck the fresh spoor of a solitary bull eland, who had evidently only recently crossed the dambo in which they were walking. They immediately followed the spoor into the forest, but like a will-o'-the-wisp it led them on and on. The beast kept moving quietly along ahead of them. Once or twice he lay down, as marks on the ground testified; but, warned no doubt by the inevitable crackling of the dry leaves and branches with which the ground was thickly covered, got up before they could get a clear view of him and again moved on—all this in a dry acacia forest of small trees and scrub in which it is impossible to see more than fifty yards ahead, with a scorching sun beating down between the trees. At noon, A——'s patience being exhausted, they again turned homewards. The driest season of the year in these forests is not the best time to choose for tracking eland.

Forest covers more or less the whole face of the country through which we passed. It lacks the stately appearance of the North of Europe forests,

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

where the tall pines rear their heads a hundred feet in the air. It cannot vie in beauty with our English woods, mostly composed of massive oaks, stately elms, graceful beech or birch, firs, and other trees, which have been carefully planted and tended for centuries. In Central Africa the forest trees are small and even sometimes insignificant, being as a rule only slender stems growing from three to five feet apart, sufficiently close to hide from view anything twenty yards off, but far enough to allow a walk between them. There is little undergrowth; and although not greatly varied, African trees have yet a beauty all their own.

Just as A—— was starting off again at 4 P.M. we heard a distant sound of singing, which gradually drew nearer, and to our intense satisfaction a quarter of an hour later our new porters from Mpika appeared. After a cursory inspection they were sent off to settle down in their camp and rest, and on A——'s return at dusk were at once paraded, but on a closer examination they proved to be a sorry lot.

The fifteen strongest-looking men were selected for A——'s machilla team, with a long-legged, well-made, manly young savage, six feet at least in height, as capitao. His appearance had quickly attracted our attention, and his evident desire to be appointed capitao was apparently acquiesced in by his comrades. He proved himself to be an excellent servant, was always cheery and good-tempered, and did his best to keep his somewhat unruly team in order. The snort of disdain and contempt which he emitted when dissatisfied with any of them was

## Mpika to Kopas

most expressive. All those connected with the Wawembes speak most highly of them as a very superior though perhaps somewhat undisciplined race of savages; and I take it that this man was a very representative specimen of his tribe, wild as a hawk, but thoroughly amenable to what he knew to be his duty. The team was a strong one, and if disciplined would have been good; but a more irritating set of men to deal with on the line of march it is impossible to imagine. Although willing enough in some respects, they were never ready to start, the reliefs were never at hand when required, the machilla had invariably to be ordered fifteen minutes before it was wanted, and even then there were laggards to be driven in at the last moment.

The whole way from Kulukenias to Broken Hill there was daily and hourly the same shouting for reliefs, the same lagging behind, and the same wrangling. They appeared to be a crew of born shirkers, and curiously enough they could not see how much they inconvenienced one another.

Maso was appointed capitao of my team, a small man with a refined, pleasant face, and quiet, nice manners; he was a complete antithesis to A——'s long-legged Mwembe. His good behaviour and diligence as a porter had brought him to my notice in early days in Nyasaland; the attention he paid to his work as machilla boy, and the manner in which he made himself generally useful on the journey from Fort Jameson to Mpika, increased the good opinion I held of him, so that I had come to look on him as one of the best men we had. His



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

personal appearance had greatly improved since he had first entered our service. As porter his only garment had been a chocolate-coloured loin-cloth; but to this, on his promotion to machilla boy at Fort Jameson, he had added a red fez and a vest of many colours. At Mpika he substituted a white "dotee" for the coloured one, so that he quite looked the part of capitao, and kept his team very well together.

After Maso came his friend Mgombo, another Blantyre boy. He was a Yao, an intelligent, useful lad, belonging to the same tribe as John. Next came John of Dedza, as we called him, and his brother, both excellent, willing lads. Unfortunately, however, John of Dedza could not accommodate himself to the Mpika boys' habit of shirking their turn. This, combined with racial antipathy, resulted in frequent rows and two or three free fights.

A smart-looking lad from Kasama, in the north, named Kazembe, who had come to Kulukeni on the look-out for work, was also engaged; he was intelligent, but a bit of a shirker. I do not think he had ever carried a machilla before, so the unaccustomed work was probably trying. He had a fine voice, and when nearing a village gave tongue lustily. He sang a couple of songs, one with the refrain:



which was shouted in chorus, some of the men taking 'seconds.' Occasionally, when very excited,



Sable Antelope and John (Angoniland).

[*See p. 71.*]



## Mpika to Kopas

he would try and induce his comrades to rush the machilla along the path, charging any men with loads who were in the way, much to their disgust and indignation, and also to my great discomfort.

To complete the team we took the most likely-looking Mpika boys; then the remaining porters stood out in all their barrenness—a more miserable lot it has never been our fate to see. John nearly wept.

Early morning of the 9th saw us at work. The prospect before us was not altogether promising. We had exactly thirty days to cover the three hundred odd miles between Kulukenis and Broken Hill; or, as Mkushi to Broken Hill was known to be a six days' stage on the regular post-road, we had twenty-four days to get to Mkushi by native tracks. With good porters and under normal circumstances the time was ample, leaving a nice balance for a little shooting *en route*. But, then, were our porters good? They did not look it. And would circumstances prove to be normal? There was no certainty of that either. Mr. Melland's personal knowledge of the country did not carry him beyond Chitambo, where his district ended. From Chitambo to Mkushi, as the crow flies, was a hundred and forty miles. We gathered that native tracks probably ran direct, but did not know their condition, the nature of the country, or the food supplies available. Should we be able to march direct?—that was the question. Shortness of food or heavy rains might necessitate a diversion from the Luambwa river to

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Serenje, and considerably increase the length of our journey.

The rainy season was upon us. The rains might commence any day, and the effect they would have on our progress was an unknown quantity, dependent entirely on the intensity with which they would break. We now realized to the full the mistake we had made in engaging our passages from Beira in advance. Had we not done so, our difficulties would have been light. It was now, unfortunately, too late to remedy the error, and the best must be made of the situation.

Then, again, we hoped to combine sport with travel. After crossing the Wulangulu Hills, North-West Rhodesia would be entered, and here all shooting must cease, unless we were prepared to pay another £50 licence on arrival at Broken Hill.

For sport, therefore, there remained at the most eighteen days, and the best shooting was likely to be obtained in the first eight days.

The name of Rhodesia was of course well known to us as representing the great territory that Mr. Rhodes' energy and genius had added to the Empire. It was only on arrival at Fort Jameson, however, that we learned the name did not, as we supposed, represent a territory sub-divided into provinces, the whole being under one central administration, but that it embraced three independent states, each with their separate systems of administration, customs, and licences. That we did not know all this was doubtless crass ignorance on our part—we plead guilty to it. The news,

## Mpika to Kopas

therefore, that the £25 shooting licence we took out at Fort Jameson was not available in North-West Rhodesia was a complete surprise to us, and a great blow, to say the least of it. North-East Rhodesia issues a smaller licence—I think, £5—which allows the traveller to shoot a specified number of the common antelope as he goes along. North-West Rhodesia might well adopt this excellent provision in the interests of the traveller through its territories, who could then undertake the journey from the Wulangulu Hills to Broken Hill without the prospect of possible starvation staring him in the face.

The former Administrator of North-East Rhodesia is now in charge of North-West Rhodesia. We cannot help hoping that by some fortuitous chance these remarks may meet his eye and receive favourable consideration.<sup>1</sup>

After this digression we must return to our porters, left sitting dejectedly by their loads, which they envisaged with no joyous eye.

Our tents, baggage, food-boxes, and other impedimenta were made up into thirty-six loads in exactly the same fashion as had prevailed since our departure from Blantyre. The tent bales were given to the strongest-looking men, and the ammunition-box and bath, slung on poles, to the four weediest-looking lads to carry. There were three "posho" loads—one of calico and two of salt. One week's "posho" in calico had been distributed the

<sup>1</sup> It has recently been proposed to amalgamate the two northern provinces under one administration; this change is expected to take place during 1911.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

previous evening, and the remaining bale was given to a poor old man who might have been any imaginable age. He carried it to Mkushi without a murmur, and without giving a minute's trouble, but by this time his condition was so feeble that we thought it better to send him home in charge of another man who had joined us on the road, but who was no longer required.

We had been advised to take the two loads of salt with us, as it was possible that after crossing the Wulangulu Hills calico would not be accepted as currency. The salt had been sent after us from Mpika, and we left it in charge of the two lads who had brought it.

We were obliged to return three boys to Mpika, who were, in our opinion, too young and weakly-looking to undertake the journey; and to replace them by two men taken from my machilla team and one from A——'s until such time as we could procure others.

By 6 A.M. all was ready, and we got under way; poor John in a state of deep despondency. I went ahead, but A—— abandoned all idea of shooting for the day, and remained behind to see to the porters, and very fortunate it was he did so. After the first few miles such scenes occurred as we had never previously experienced in all our travels. The porters lagged behind, refused to keep in the places assigned them, were impertinent to John, sat down to rest when and where they wished, refused to go on when told to do so; and in many cases, from sheer physical incapacity, remained

## Mpika to Kopas

weeping piteously by the road-side. A nice, clean-looking youth, the physical equivalent of an English lad of sixteen or seventeen, who had been written on as porter, was shedding abundant tears as A—— passed him, and on being asked what was the matter, explained that though he wished to do his work the load was too heavy for his strength. He was carrying A——'s dressing-bag, with a light camp-chair and table strapped on top of it—a load of from fifty to fifty-five pounds at the outside—made up in identically the same fashion as hitherto.

Soon afterwards we reached a village and halted for breakfast. The lad was brought up, the table and chair were taken from him, and he was given the dressing-bag to carry without any addition. To this he made no objection, and gave no further trouble. Several other loads were re-arranged, and an additional one made up of the remnants. We asked the chief to find us a porter, but as he was unable to procure one we had to abandon one load to his care—an unpopular one, as it consisted of a large and clumsy bale of skins, and this, though he promised to send it after us at the first available opportunity, we personally never expected to see again.

After breakfast matters went a trifle better, and we reached Mwoke village (not shown on map) about 11 A.M., and decided to halt. The place selected for our camp was a short distance beyond the village, and here we remained watching anxiously for our tents, which, according to the place assigned to them in the order of march, should



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

have been the first to arrive. Messenger after messenger was sent back to look for these loads, until it turned out that their carriers were comfortably seated in the village, chatting with the local worthies. After three-quarters of an hour or so they kindly consented to come into camp. I need hardly say that they never carried our tents again, and that their connection with our caravan terminated at the earliest opportunity.

That afternoon A—— went out as usual in search of game, but saw absolutely nothing. During his absence a number of women from the village paid me a visit. Each brought a present of two or three eggs placed in a small basket, in return for which they asked for beads. Unfortunately, I had very few beads with me, only one small bunch of fine pink ones, that I had bought at Mpika; these were quickly disposed of, and the women had to be content with calico. We regretted that we had not provided ourselves with a load of beads, as they would have proved very useful during this portion of our journey; they were often asked for, but at the same time it must be remembered that beads are heavy to carry, and expensive to buy. Old tins, empty bottles, or jars were also eagerly seized upon.

The village chief called soon after, and A——, who had returned, asked him to provide us with a few porters. He promised to do his best; in the end, however, none of his people could be induced to go to Broken Hill, though two men volunteered to go as far as Kopas. This addition to our numbers enabled us to discharge two unsatisfactory char-

## Mpika to Kopas

acters who had been insubordinate on the line of march, and whose continued presence with our caravan might have proved a source of mischief.

Next morning, the 10th, saw us early on the road. Just as we were starting, a fine looking native from the last village strode into camp, carrying our clumsy bundle of skins on his head. He agreed to come on to Kopas without a murmur, and carried his load throughout the rather long march in a way that elicited our admiration. We did our best to induce him to accompany us to Broken Hill, but he would not; he had already earned his hut-tax, and wished to return to his village.

An incident occurred on this march which was to cause us considerable anxiety in the future. Two Angonies overtook the caravan, and presented me with a note addressed to the A. L. C. at Broken Hill. I demurred at first to looking at it, but, as John explained to me that it referred to some property of ours that the Angonies had with them, I opened it and found sure enough that it contained the invoice for the box we had left behind at Fort Jameson to be sent direct to Broken Hill. As A—— was not at hand, having preceded me, and as the matter appeared complicated, I told the men to follow on, which they did.

Our march proved rather long and tedious, up hill and down dale, along the narrow native track, passing from dry forest to dry dambo, and from dry dambo to dry forest, and though there were indications of early spring in the foliage, there were

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

no signs of animal or bird life to relieve the tedium. We were heartily glad to reach the Kaukibia river at last, and to see its wooded banks and clear running stream, forming cascades and eddies amongst the rocks with which the bed was strewn.

Our tents were pitched under a clump of shady trees, which projected out into the dambo from the adjacent forest, and were within easy reach of the river-bank.

Lunch over, we sent for the Angonies, and after some questioning, succeeded in more or less unravelling the mystery connected with their advent.

It appeared that the box in their charge was the portmanteau containing all our "store clothing"—to use a colloquialism—which we had left with the African Lakes Company at Fort Jameson to be sent on to Broken Hill, and there to await our arrival. The manager of the company at Fort Jameson had apparently handed the trunk, together with a hat-box, to these Angonies—the load was a double one—and told them to trot along with it to Broken Hill, a march of three hundred miles, giving them the necessary "posho" for the way and an invoice directed to the manager at Broken Hill. That he should have done so speaks well for the safety with which goods travel in Central Africa, and for the honesty of the porters. At the same time, had we known that our precious portmanteau was to travel in this haphazard fashion, we should have kept it with us, notwithstanding the fact that on the line



John and Saudi with Sable Head.

[See p. 71.]



## Mpika to Kopas

of march every unnecessary load is an extra trouble. Had this box failed to reach us we should have been forced to travel to Beira in our camp clothes, and, in addition, have been considerably inconvenienced on our homeward journey.

The three Angonies to whom it had been confided appeared to have reasoned the matter out much as follows: "The white man to whom the box belongs has gone to Mpika, a short, pleasant road, whereas we have been told to go to Broken Hill, a long and tiresome one. If we go to Mpika and hand over the box, the white man will receive us with joy, and give us extra 'posho' for our return, and we shall be saved many hard days' travel." Alas! poor Angonies, there was a serious flaw in their reasoning, which had not included the possibility of the white man not wanting his trunk.

However, in their happy innocence they trotted along gaily to Mpika, only to find on arrival that we had already departed. We never ascertained what actually occurred there, but as there was a small store belonging to the A. L. C. in charge of a native, it is probable that they applied to him for instructions and were redirected to Broken Hill. They then took the Serenje road—the direct way—but hearing no news of us and ascertaining we were not ahead, one of them remained with the box in a village where there was a mission school, while the two others struck across country to search for us—an act which speaks well for their intelligence, if not for their obedience to instructions—

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

in the hope of being quit of the job and the remainder of their tiresome journey.

They soon heard of our whereabouts, owing to the extraordinary rapidity with which news of a strange white man's presence is reported all over the country, and joined us in the manner above related.

We were, unfortunately, unable to locate the village in which our property had been left; but as we gathered that it was not more than a day's march, we decided, in view of its precious contents, that the trunk had better join us. We accordingly gave instructions, and to make assurance doubly sure, detailed Maso to accompany the Angonies, and, giving them some "posho," started them off, the men assuring us that they would rejoin in a couple of days. Maso carried a spear decorated with a white tail that gave him a look of dignity and importance.

During the afternoon a number of natives from Kopas village passed our camp with loads of dried fish they were taking into Mpika for sale. One man had a good bow and arrows, which we persuaded him to sell us. The bow was covered with python skin, and the arrows barbed. Before parting with them, he carefully scraped off the poison with which the arrows' heads were covered, wrapping it up in a piece of paper I gave him for the purpose; it was a sticky substance, and came off in flakes, but the natives appeared to attach some value to it.

In the evening A—— saw zebra, puku, and a



1. *Strophanthus caudatus*, Rolfe. (Pp. 110, 111, 185.)  
2. PLANT (p. 56), also a TREE (*Orbuz*). Rhodesia.



CRIMSON LILY (*Gloriosa*).



GROUND ORCHID  
(*Lisorchilus arenarius* Lindl.).  
N.E. Rhodesia. (P. 181.)





## Mpika to Kopas

warthog, and returned to camp hopeful as to the prospects of sport for the morrow.

It was at this camp that I first observed a charming plant, a ground orchid (*Lissochilus arenarius*), growing in the grass. It was pale mauve in colour and had a delicate scent. I also found some large flowering crocus: mauve, purple, and white, and dug up some of the bulbs. Asparagus fern was also plentiful.

I find a note in my diary to say that the weather was growing very hot.

Next morning, the 11th, our route took us along the Kaukibia so far as its junction with the Luatikila river, where we crossed and proceeded towards Kopas. The forest had been left behind, and our track traversed a large cultivated plain bordering on marshes, which looked as if they stretched right away to Lake Bangwelo. Here the sun was fiercely hot, and we were heartily glad to reach the village, a large one, about 11 A.M. The inhabitants received us with acclamation, and numbers of men and women turned out to welcome and conduct us to the usual travellers' rest-house, a ramshackle looking, straw-covered wooden erection, standing under a big tree, amidst the gardens, and about half a mile from the village. We declined to remain here at any price, so were taken a short distance further on, and had our tents pitched among the trees on the edge of the forest. Women and children collected in swarms, impelled by their desire to see a white woman, and squatted down close to the tent, watching every movement.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

I suggested, through an interpreter, that they had better sing to me; but, although they confessed they could sing, they were not inclined to do so at the moment. I suppose it was too early in the morning, or that they were too full of astonishment at seeing a white woman to have room for any other emotion.

Often in passing a village native women and children would run along by the side of the machilla, hopping over any obstacle in their efforts to see the first white woman they had probably ever set eyes upon. One felt for a few fleeting moments all the joys of popularity!

Soon after our arrival, the chief, Kopa, a young-looking man, turned up with the usual present. We asked him to provide us with some porters, promising him a good "prize" in return if he would procure us good men, and a further "prize" at the end of our journey if the men behaved themselves. This he promised to do, and returned to the village. After his departure we sent a message to our numerous visitors asking them to go home, but to return in the evening with any articles, food stuffs, chickens, eggs, etc., they might have for sale, and at last had the place to ourselves.

That evening A—— went quite a long way into the marshes, but failed to see anything larger than puku and reedbuck. Meanwhile the village women brought a quantity of eggs, chickens, and flour for sale, as also some cheetah skins. Kopa himself did not return, but favourable reports were received as to the prospects of getting porters.

## Mpika to Kopas

Next morning Kopa arrived soon after dawn, with quite a number of men, all anxious to accompany us to Broken Hill. We engaged ten of the best-looking amongst them, two of whom joined my machilla team in place of two I did not like.

In consequence of this welcome addition to our numbers we were able to dispense with the services of four undesirables, and should have dismissed more of them but for the fact that we had, unfortunately, lodged their wages in advance at Mpika; a foolish thing to have done, for though it was calculated to save us some trouble at the end of our journey, it placed us very much in the hands of our men, who seemed to think that they would get their money regardless of their behaviour during the march. Natives on reaching the end of their journey are apt to spend the greater part of their wages in the native stores in place of returning with it to their villages, and for this reason officials are glad to receive the money in advance and pay the men on their return. Mr. Gordon's (of Lilongwe) system was a good one. He asked us, in place of paying the men, to send him back a cheque for their wages by the capitao he had kindly lent us to look after them, and this we did. As I am on the subject of porters I will anticipate the end of our story by saying here that Kopa's men behaved admirably throughout the trip, and that after the departure of the six undesirables the conduct of the Mpika boys showed a marked improvement.

## CHAPTER XIV.

KOPAS TO MLEMBO RIVER—ELAND AT LAST—TROUBLES  
WITH OUR NEW CARAVAN—DISCIPLINE MAINTAINED.

WE left Kopas at an early hour, and after about an hour's march we came to a small village situated at the edge of the forest, and while passing through its gardens crossed the fresh spoor of a herd of eland which had been feeding quite recently on the cassava roots. Ten minutes or so later we struck water and decided to halt. Having selected a favourable spot for our camp and eaten a hasty breakfast, A—— returned to the village to follow the eland spoor, which led almost immediately into the forest. After about two hours' hard work in dry forest under a scorching sun, beating down on him through the dwarf acacia trees, he succeeded in coming up with the herd, which had for some time been slowly moving on ahead after their usual fashion, and was fortunate enough to secure a fine bull. Messengers were at once despatched to camp, where their arrival caused great rejoicings, and all available men were despatched to bring in the beast. It is difficult to realize the huge size of an eland, which stands about six feet high at the shoulder. Enormous joints of meat were being brought in all day long, the legs requiring two men to carry them, while the massive

## Kopas to Mlembo River

head, with its twisted horns, weighed perhaps a hundredweight.

In the evening a large dambo was visited, but was drawn blank, not a beast being visible. Our camp, which, though not far from the river, was well in the forest, was an extremely pretty one, with wild flowers growing all around us. I noticed a charming pink clematis clothing the shrubs, also numberless bulbs of a large sort of crocus in full flower. I had some dug up and brought them home, where I hope they may do well. The soil was light and sandy.

That evening the camp fires were very animated, and much eland meat was consumed. The following morning, the 13th, A—— was called at 3 A.M., and went to the village gardens in the hope that the herd might visit them, but they failed to do so, and he returned at dawn without having seen a beast. We were soon on the road again, the track running somewhat downhill through rather nice country; but, as usual, there was no game to be seen. Malamas was reached sooner than we had expected, and the camp pitched in forest just outside the village gardens, not far from the high bank of the Lumbatwa river, which at this season of the year was nothing but a swamp, about three-quarters of a mile broad, and not too easy to cross. Our aneroid gave the altitude as four thousand feet. We had been told to expect sassaby in the neighbourhood, and were much pleased to hear from the village chief that a herd was at no great distance on the opposite side of the river. By 4 P.M. A—— was

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

out again, and after crossing the marsh soon sighted the herd. The wind, which was unfavourable, necessitated a long *détour*, so that by the time he got within shot it was getting dusk. He secured three of these handsome animals, a species of bastard hartebeest, with lovely, sheeny brown skins. Unfortunately two of them proved to be cows; but as both carry horns, it is difficult to distinguish cows from bulls in the distance.

The first sassaby, on being hit, ran forward a couple of hundred yards before falling; the next two fell to the shots. A——, knowing the whereabouts of the first beast, walked to the other two and set the men to work cutting them up. By the time this was completed it was quite dark, so that when the party proceeded to look for the first sassaby they were unable to distinguish the beast from the ant-hills with which the plain was studded—each of which looked like a dead animal in the dark—and in the end had to leave him on the ground. After a tiresome journey through the marsh, the party returned to camp much pleased with themselves.

The heads were skinned by firelight, and the circle of dark figures and grotesque faces standing round watching the proceedings and waiting patiently to receive their portions of meat looked weird and picturesque in the fitful light of the burning logs. Feasting prevailed up to a late hour.

As sport seemed probable in the neighbourhood, we decided to halt next day, so as to give time to Maso and the Angonies to rejoin us. In the early



Casadilla

The Chieftainess Casadilla (Lilongwe District).

[See p. 82.]





## Kopas to Mlembo River

morning A—— again crossed the marsh and went in search of the dead sassaby, finding it easily; but alas! the jackals had been at work during the night. He saw the herd far out on the plain, but did not get a shot; and after a long round to the eastward, struck the river bank and returned along it to camp without seeing anything else. In the afternoon the river bank was followed in a westerly direction; but, except for a couple of reed buck, there was nothing. This was a disappointment, for the local hunter had reported roan antelope as probable.

Cassava seemed to be the principal crop grown in the districts round Malamas. It is a rather pretty plant, very easy of cultivation. The natives grind the sweet root and make it into a kind of porridge, but they also eat it raw. Bread cannot be made from it, as in this form it is indigestible, causing distension of the stomach. The people here grow hardly any maize, saying it cannot be grown twice on the same ground, and cutting down forest is very rightly restricted. These people were real savages. The women wore scarcely any clothing: a small piece of bark cloth in front and a cloak of skin on their shoulders for warmth.

Maso failed to arrive, and this caused us some anxiety. However, we could not afford to delay any longer, so we left a message for him with the chief, telling him to hurry on after us.

We started next morning early for Kalonge village, on the Lukulu river; and after marching for about two hours through nice country, rather more open than usual, we reached the river, and to our

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

surprise found that it was about fifty yards broad, quite full of water, and unfordable. We had not seen a single head of game on the road, but by the river there were plenty of puku, as was almost invariably the case in the neighbourhood of water. After following the river bank for another hour or so, wondering how we were to cross, the track led us suddenly into a marsh, where the reeds were above our heads and the going extremely bad. Every now and then a man would sink in over his knees, and even with eight men to the team the machilla boys had the greatest difficulty in keeping their feet. After travelling in this fashion for some little distance, not knowing the least what to expect, we suddenly emerged and found ourselves standing on the river bank on firm ground, with a hundred yards of deep water in front of us and no apparent means of crossing.

Someone shouted, and first one, and then quite a number of dug-out canoes appeared from amongst the reeds on the opposite bank to ferry us over. These dug-outs are merely as their name implies—the trunks of large trees hollowed out. They have no seats, leak horribly, and are by no means the safest form of transport, for the least motion will upset them; the natives are, however, very expert in their management. I was taken over among the first, and, seated on a small stool in the middle of the dug-out, felt comparatively safe; in fact, as the air on the water was beautifully cool, I rather enjoyed the trip. The old boatman landed me carefully at an easy place, and I was glad to find

## Kopas to Mlombo River

that the far bank was firmer and less marshy than the side we had just left, and that the village was close by. A——'s crossing was more adventurous than mine. He got into a canoe and sat down in the centre with his precious .500-bore rifle on his knees. The canoe was pushed off, but so soon as her nose was clear of the mud his weight brought a break, some six inches long in her prow, to the level of the water, which flowed in freely. He was quickly on shore again, and his remarks on dug-outs in general, and this one in particular, soon produced a safer conveyance. While waiting on the bank we saw something swimming in the water that looked like a large water-snake, but which turned out to be an otter.

The crossing took some time, but everything was brought safely over. There were ten boatmen, and each man received threepence, with which they were perfectly satisfied. The photograph gives a very good idea of the scene.

The village of Kalonge was situated on the southern bank, close to the river, which was a fairly large one. The villagers were great fishermen, and if we are entitled to judge from the number of skins lying about, were great hunters as well. We passed round it, and camped in some fields on the far side, near the edge of a backwater, not by any means an ideal spot, and at any other season of the year we must have suffered severely from mosquitoes. However, it was getting late, and the men were tired, so we had to make the best of it. Next morning A—— found that half-a-mile further on

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

—a frequent occurrence—would have given us an excellent camping-ground.

We sent the guide who had brought us from Malamas back to look for Maso, and to tell him to engage more porters, if necessary, and to push on. We were beginning to get very anxious about the non-appearance of our trunk. The guide, who wore a red fez, was an intelligent native, and had been in touch with civilization. He was promised a good reward if he returned with Maso and our box.

The chief came to see us, and A—— questioned him as to the length of the next day's march and the water which might be expected along the route: an important consideration, as the days were getting hot. For the first time, however, he experienced some difficulty in getting reliable information; and all he could gather for certain was that there was water in the Lulimala, distant by the map about twenty miles, and that this river would have to be our objective. He therefore asked for a good local guide to take us there.

The difficulty as regards information increased as we moved southwards. We were now entering a district in which the natives were not only of low type, with intellects singularly undeveloped, but they had also apparently but little intercourse with their neighbours, at least it was to this we attributed their very defective knowledge of time, distance, and state of the tracks. They lied freely, of course, but cross-examination tended to show that they lied as much from ignorance as from intention.



Native Village.

15, p. 87



## Kopas to Mlombo River

The chief returned in the evening with the news that as a large hunting- or fishing-party was starting off next morning eastward along the river, he was unable to furnish us with a local guide, but produced in his place a native belonging to the south, who was said to be travelling homewards in our direction.

We were early under way, starting about the same time as the hunters, but as they stuck to the river our paths soon diverged. After travelling for two hours or more through a dried-up looking country without seeing a sign of game I began to be very hungry, wanted my breakfast, and said so. A—— was disinclined to stop, for as we were gradually descending, he hoped that water would soon be found, but after questioning the guide, who assured him there was no water ahead, he consented to halt. As was customary, the loads kept coming in while we were eating, and, possibly because we had stopped rather earlier than usual, were all collected before breakfast was over. John arrived, and as it appeared likely from what the guide had said that some distance had still to be covered before water could be expected, he was told to go on ahead with his porters so as to avoid unnecessary delay. They had not been gone ten minutes, and we were just getting into our machillas, when a messenger came running back to say that there was water and game just ahead. A—— rushed off, and within a mile of where we had been breakfasting found a beautiful water-hole with nice young green grass all around it—the only one we struck at any distance from a village during the whole of our journey from Mpika



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

to Broken Hill—but, alas! the large herd of sassaby that had been feeding there on the arrival of the caravan had moved off.

The question now arose, what was best to be done? to go on to the Lulimala or not? Had the time at our disposal been ample, we should undoubtedly have stopped where we were. It was a pleasant site for a camp, and there was every prospect of seeing game; but alas! time was important—it was the 16th—our march had only occupied two hours. If there was a reasonable prospect of finding water on the road, we must go on. But how was it possible to ascertain the truth?

As it was evidently hopeless for either John or ourselves to attempt to get reliable information out of the guide, it struck A—— that perhaps the machilla capitao, and two of Kopa's men might be able to find out something, so they were told to see what they could do. They held a consultation, and reported favourably for a move, saying that there was a water-hole, which probably still held water, about the same distance ahead as we had already covered, so a start was made, and, sure enough, after another two hours we reached the place—to find it dry. Men were set to dig, but with no result; it was useless. Here was another quandary. Should we go backward or forward? The return march would take another two hours without water. If we went on it would take at least three; but a retreat is always disagreeable, and sometimes demoralizing, therefore A—— gave the order to advance, and on we went accordingly.

## Kopas to Mlembo River

After another hour a small deserted village was reached, but the water-holes were dry. The men had marched fairly well so far, but were beginning to be disheartened, and wasted valuable time hunting for water, which was evidently not to be found. We got them all off at last, but the rate of progress had become very slow, as they kept continually sitting down, and much coaxing was required to get them up again. About another hour's march brought us to a fresh set of water-holes, and at the bottom of one of these was a trickle of water giving just sufficient to fill a mug every two or three minutes. Here most of the men got a drink, but this did not satisfy them; they no sooner had had one cupful than they wanted another. It was really piteous to see them scrambling for the little there was. One man got right into the hole, and was nearly smothered by his fellows climbing over him. The good men, however, soon went on again headed by "Cooky," but the weakly lads and ne'er-do-wells with whom we were hampered gave considerable trouble, either fighting for water in the pit, or lying in the shade and refusing to move, so that it was some time before the whole party were on the road again. The rest of the march was a very trying one. About half-a-dozen carried their loads straight on to the Lulimala without stopping; the majority, however, were only got along with extreme difficulty, and kept throwing themselves down by the side of the road. Fortunately, we were crossing an open plain with only a few trees here and there, so were able to keep an eye upon them,

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

which we could not have done in the forest. It is only fair to say that in most cases the trouble was due to physical incapacity and want of stamina. The youth who carried my husband's dressing-case shed many tears, and in the end gave out completely and had to be relieved. One poor lad, a very plucky boy, who carried a load of salt and had always hitherto been one of the first in the caravan, showed me as I passed a nasty punctured wound on one of his shins, which the heat, fatigue, and want of water had aggravated to such an extent that he was quite incapable of carrying his load. That evening, for the first time, he came to me to have the wound dressed, but subsequently turned up most evenings during the remainder of the trip. When I first saw it, the wound was quite three inches deep; but by the time we reached Broken Hill it was nearly healed. I ascertained that he had injured himself digging in his village before he joined our caravan.

Matters got so bad that A—— had to call for volunteers among the machilla boys, gun-bearers, and servants, and the promise of a reward brought forward several. With the exception of two spare men per team, the machilla boys took loads, and we walked a good deal to save the remainder. John came out well, encouraging the men, and from time to time easing them of their loads; he kept a watchful eye on those who slipped from the track with the intention of sleeping the day out comfortably under a tree, so that only one man escaped him, and he was caught and brought on by the

## Kopas to Mlembo River

*machilla* captao. Even "Breeches," who a few days previously had been very indignant at being given a bit of meat to carry, took up a load and strode off with it to camp.

When at last I reached our destination, about 3 P.M., I found that "Cooky," Franco, Laban, and some half-dozen porters had arrived. I at once secured some villagers and sent them off with water for the men. This relief party met A—— and his rear-guard about two miles back. By 5 P.M. all were in camp and the loads correct.

We made out that the whole distance covered could not have exceeded eighteen miles, and with a decent lot of men we should have been in camp by 1 or 2 P.M.; but even good men would have been unduly tried. A waterless march in hot weather is a thing to be avoided: it was bad luck, and not bad management.

We ourselves, although glad of the lunch "Cooky" had ready for us, having had no refreshment to speak of since breakfast, had suffered no ill effects, as the heat of the sun had fortunately been tempered by a nice breeze and a few clouds.

In the evening all the porters who had done well, and the *machilla* boys who had carried loads, were duly rewarded, and seemed quite pleased with themselves.

Next morning the men were not very eager for a move, but the promise of a short march got them on the road in fairly good time. We had struck the Lulimala at a village whose name I forget, but which is probably that marked Miava on the map, a

## † A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

name which is not known locally. Villages are called after their chiefs; a change of chief means change of name for the village, and this is very misleading.

After our previous day's hard work we had only intended making a short march of four or five miles across the Lulimala to the place marked Chitambo on the map, where Livingstone, whose monument we wished to see, died in 1878.

Following the right bank for a couple of miles, the path descended across the dry river bed, and traversed a plain covered with disused ant-hills of every shape and size, often, indeed, grotesque in their proportions. On reaching the forest by which the plain was bounded we called for breakfast. Our porters were close behind us, and as we were told that there was no water in our neighbourhood they were sent on to the village, which was supposed to be close by. We ourselves followed so soon as breakfast was over; unfortunately the distance proved much greater than we had expected—two hours' march at the least; and on arrival we found that the name of the village was Mpundu—probably the Chimpundu marked on the map—not Chitambo, as we had expected, this name being seemingly unknown.

The day proved intensely hot, the hottest we experienced during this portion of our journey, so that in the afternoon we did not feel equal to the long return march into the river valley, and consequently did not see Livingstone's monument, which is, I believe, a tablet on a tree, recording

## Kopas to Mlembo River

his name and those of his two faithful followers who buried his heart at this spot.

Livingstone's followers were so devoted to him that they conveyed his body to the nearest post of white men, hundreds of miles away on the Shire river. When one considers the climate and the difficulties of travelling so far in a wild, unsettled country, the devotion these men showed to the great white chief is most remarkable. Perhaps the fear that an accusation of treachery might be brought against them if they failed to produce the body may have had something to do with their action.

In the evening I gave out "posho," and A—— went to investigate a large dambo running south-eastward; it was, however, quite dry, and nothing was to be seen in it but a few reed-buck. Here the soil, which was of a peaty nature, was burning or rather smouldering in patches, and had evidently been lit by the natives; but for what reason we did not discover.

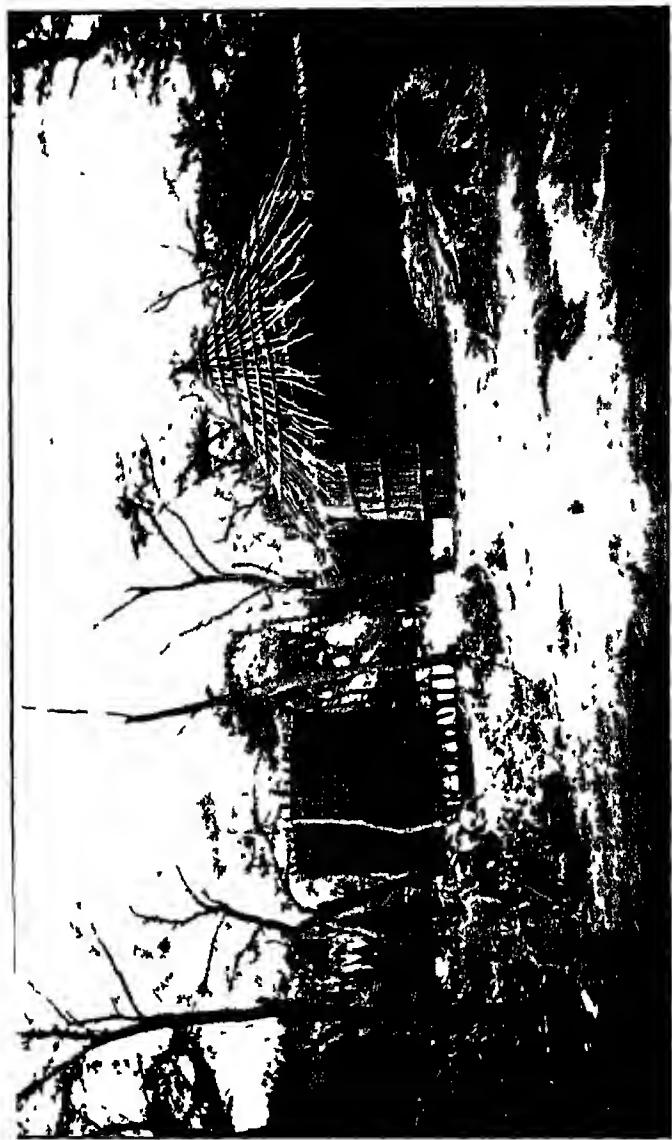
The ant-hills we passed this day were as hard as rock, and so thick that they reminded us of an over-crowded churchyard. They contain some glutinous substance which is used as building material both by Europeans and natives. They were at times ten or twelve feet high, most fantastic in shape, looking like plaster casts of giant forms. Another day we passed a district where every tree was covered with red mud, hiding the ravages of white ants or termites. Dead wood lying on the ground is quickly consumed by these insects, a few

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

crumbling remains marking the outline only. I wondered why the growing trees were not also utterly destroyed, but came to the conclusion that in the rainy season the mud gets saturated and falls from the trees, thus saving them. Whether this beneficent rain destroys a large number of ants at the same time I have no knowledge. In some places where the white ant was absent, young saplings were growing from fallen trunks promising to replace in time the parent tree.

One would often doze off in the early morning, then, as in a dream, hear "swi-ish, swi-ish," and wake to find the carriers wading through a bog. A fragrant smell would rise to one's nostrils as the men trod upon various sweet-smelling herbs that grew in marshy ground. A plant, something like wild mint, was very fragrant, and should be, I think, medicinal. Perhaps on a damp morning hundreds of centipedes with red rings would be seen lying on the top of every shining stone or ant-hill, beautiful creatures after their own kind. I also noticed large black centipedes six inches long, with bodies thick as a man's finger; their yellow legs are not all on the ground at once; they rise and fall, making waves of colour as they walk. On one occasion a centipede over a foot long and thick in proportion was crawling on the outside of my tent. I called one of the boys to remove him, which he did with a stick.

From our machillas we saw little nature pictures: sometimes a yellow butterfly poised on a scarlet flower; at others, green caterpillars crawling up the



Native Huts and Grain Store.





## Kopas to Mlembo River

sunny side of the trees. These caterpillars are the kind natives cook and eat.

Of leaf insects we saw several at different times: one a bright green, a perfect imitation of a reed blade, its folded wings the counterpart of a folded bud. Another I captured at Mua—an exact copy of a bit of dried grass, but allowed it to escape, as I had no killing bottle or collecting box. A third insect was bright red poised among foliage of the same colour. All were examples of the theory of protective colouring in nature.

In the early morning in the higher altitude the sun shone on the glistening leaves of vivid green, heavy with dew. Our men, pushing their way through narrow paths, would often be saturated with moisture, which was, however, quickly dried by the sun.

There is a great charm wandering far away from the busy haunts of men, living close to Nature, the great mother of all. It is not only a wonderful rest to the nerves, but allows one's thoughts to expand to higher levels than is possible in the crowded atmosphere of home.

After this digression I must return to our doings.

We were very anxious about Maso and our box, and were contemplating without any pleasure the prospect of a journey to the coast in our camp kit, though we thought it possible that the boys had given up the cross-country journey and were proceeding direct to Mkushi to await us there.

That afternoon I was sitting in front of the tent when Laban rushed up with the news that

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Maso and the box were in sight ; and, sure enough, in a few minutes the party, including the guide with the red fez, turned up smiling. They had had no adventures, but had been unable to push on rapidly owing to shortness of food, and had been delayed at the Lukulu river, the ferrymen refusing to paddle them over unless paid in advance, and they had no money left. The matter was, however, referred to the chief, who behaved extremely well, and ordered the ferrymen to bring them across free, on the ground that they had been well paid for taking over our caravan, of which Maso and the Angonies formed a part.

The Angonies now joined the caravan and carried our box to Broken Hill. While not entirely forgiving them the anxiety they had caused us, we got to like them very much ; they were pleasant fellows, always the first on the road and the first in camp, and were a godsend to John. Maso and the guide were suitably rewarded, also an extra man who helped them from the Lukulu.

Next day we crossed the ridge dividing the valley of the Lulimala from that of the Mlembo, and after passing through the usual alternations of dry dambo and drier forest were well pleased when at about 10 A.M. we suddenly struck a wide river twenty to thirty yards broad, which proved to be the Mlembo, and after crossing it found ourselves quite close to Manga Ela's village—our destination. The chief was most obliging, giving us plenty of local information, and explained that in place of being close to the junction of the Mlembo and Luambwa

## Kopas to Mlembo River

rivers, as we hoped, we were at least half a day's march from it, and that our actual position was a few miles to the westward of the Mlembo and Kasanka rivers. A—— had completely lost our position on the map, owing to the confusion over Chitambo and Chimpundu. The chief also assured us there would be no difficulty in marching direct to Mkushi, *via* Musiro and the Luambwa river.

In the afternoon A—— went out with a local hunter, who had been sent by the chief, and saw a number of puku. I took a stroll along the river, which was very pretty, and found some fragrant white lilies, several flowers on one stem. During my walk I passed a native at work in the gardens and near by a small boy about ten years of age, who, catching sight of me rather suddenly, screamed with fright and ran to hide behind his father. Greatly amused, I spoke to him and reassured him. No doubt a strange white face was as much a shock to him as a black one would be to a little English child. On my return to camp I again passed these natives on their way home. The little lad had recovered from his fright, and was striding in front shouldering an axe. I smiled at him and made a remark, and he smiled back in return. Some of these native boys, with their large, intelligent eyes, are most attractive. They often accompanied their fathers when they called to see us, and would sit down at the door of the tent taking in everything with eyes of wonder. I believe it is a well-known fact that African boys are

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often very precocious, but their intelligence does not increase proportionally to the growth of their bodies.

The only serious case of insubordination that occurred throughout our journey from Blantyre to Broken Hill happened soon after our arrival in this camp. We were sitting down under the shade of a big tree, on the other side of which our tent was being pitched. I happened to look round and saw an Mpika boy, who had been told by John to lend a hand, suddenly rush at and strike him. The Nyasaland boys ran at once to John's assistance, and a nasty row would have resulted but for A——, who stopped the fight immediately, had the man seized and securely tied to a convenient tree, where he could do no further damage, and told him that he would be returned to Mpika next day. He was a troublesome fellow, who would have been dismissed long before, but for the fact that he was one of the strongest physically in A——'s machilla team.

The machilla capitao was put in charge of the prisoner, and instructed to give him a sufficiency of food and water. No further trouble ensued, and the day passed quietly.

Soon after A——'s return to camp that evening a deputation of Mpika boys, headed by the machilla capitao, came to ask him in a most respectful manner not to send the boy who had struck John back to the boma, but to punish him himself. The delinquent was sent for and asked whether he would prefer to return to Mpika for punishment, or whether he would take a "dozen" from his capitao, the



Selling Corn Cobs. Nyasaland.



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smallest punishment that could be awarded him for the serious offence of striking the headman. He decided on the "dozen"; and so soon as the whole of the porters had been assembled to view the ceremony, the big Mwembe applied the rod with great gusto.

The man took his punishment so well that A—— let him off with half-a-dozen, and then made a speech to the company, in which he explained that the person of the headman was sacred, that he was merely the instrument for carrying out the white man's orders, and that he must be treated with proper respect and with implicit obedience accordingly. I need hardly say that I retired to the tent during the execution, but the sound of the rod was not entirely inaudible. The speech was very well received: the whole incident had a most beneficial effect on the discipline of the caravan, and the culprit himself was in no way resentful, and gave no further trouble of any sort or kind.

A traveller should never personally strike a native except in self-defence. It is an unwise thing to do, as it at once lowers his prestige.

A white man marching along with a number of natives, in sparsely settled districts many miles from any constituted authority, is placed in a somewhat invidious position when travelling in English territories. His judicial right over his caravan is not officially recognized as it is in German territory, where beyond two days' march from a boma he has full authority. English officials are for the most part tactful and experienced men, and should any



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question arise, readily recognize the traveller's necessity. All the same, he is in a dilemma—if he fails to maintain reasonable discipline, his caravan will become a bear-garden, and the security not only of his goods but of his person may easily be endangered; if, on the other hand, he inflicts corporal punishment, he is committing a technically illegal action, which no one wishes to do.

In North-East Rhodesia the difficulty is very apparent, as the bomas are few and far between. From the time we left Mpika till we reached Broken Hill—a matter of six weeks—we were never within two days of a boma, and when at Musiro the nearest boma was at Serenje, sixty miles off.

But bad cases of assault, especially attacks on superiors, must be punished by flogging, in the interest of the personal safety of every member of the caravan. The punishment should only be inflicted after a regular investigation, and the executioner should be a man of position in the caravan other than the man assaulted. All other offences which necessitate drastic punishment are best punished by dismissal. After the first week or so the mere threat of dismissal is a very effective weapon in the traveller's hands.

Early morning of the 19th saw us on the march following the left bank of the Mlembo river; here a wide stream running between high banks. The scenery on both sides of the river was very pretty, forest alternating with meadow-like land, in which numbers of puku were running about. Two of these

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were shot, as also a fine specimen of Crawshay's waterbuck (*C. defassa Crawshayi*).

The shooting delayed us somewhat, so that we took two hours to reach the junction of the Mlembo with the Kasanka river, where we halted for breakfast. The Kasanka was during the last mile or so of its course little better than a stream running through a marsh, which in a wet season must be troublesome to cross.

Soon after breakfast we reached the point where the track to Musiro branched southward through the forest; but as the prospect of sport seemed good, and as Musiro was several hours' distant, we preferred to follow the Mlembo and Luambwa rivers, and eventually camped in the forest under some beautiful trees a couple of miles or so to the eastward of their junction. That afternoon "Cooky," who was fond of prospecting, found about fifty crocodile eggs on a sandbank in the river bed and brought them to us, thinking we might like an omelette. This we declined, but I fancy others were less fastidious.

A—— again saw plenty of puku, but no other game, though a couple of men who went along the river to buy flour declared they had seen a roan antelope.

The day had been very hot, but a heavy thunderstorm, which broke towards evening, quickly sent the temperature down.

The explanation some natives give of a thunderstorm is very curious. The great crocodile of the air is anxious to come to earth, so he blinds mortals with lightning; and while they are unable to see, he

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descends to earth with a great noise. A Belgian, who had travelled through Africa with Stanley, told us that he had often tried to get at native ideas. Some tribes materialize everything, as they have no conception of the abstract. This, of course, applies only to the real savage. Natives who have been in touch with civilization understand things better ; they have wonderful imaginations, and enlarge greatly on their experiences.

The rain, though it cleared towards sunset, came on again during the night. The wet season had commenced.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE LUAMBWA TO THE DIFUNA AND KIAMANDA RIVERS  
—AN UNKNOWN ROAD—TRAVELLING THROUGH  
HEAVY RAINS—INTELLECTUAL INCAPACITY OF  
THE NATIVES—POOR MASO'S TROUBLES.

MARCHING in the rainy season, though one gets accustomed to it, as to everything else, is always disagreeable to travellers. While getting ready for the road minor troubles are many and various ; there is a general feeling of dampness about everything ; the machillas are wet, the chairs are wet, the beds and bedding have to be prepared for the march inside the tent. All this causes delay, and fills the tent with natives when one would like to shelter in it oneself. Everything gets covered with mud, and unless very careful one is certain to get wet also. The tents present a real difficulty, for when sodden with rain they weigh considerably more than when they are dry ; also, continued travelling in a damp state will damage them.

On the road one is somewhat in a dilemma. Often a walk would be pleasant, but boots get soaked in no time, and travelling for hours in a machilla with wet feet is a thing to be avoided. Loads are a constant source of anxiety ; perishable goods, such as salt and bundles of skins, are very likely to be spoilt ; bedding that has not been carefully covered will

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arrive wet, and, worse than all, some cherished possession will as likely as not get smashed owing to the fall of its carrier on the slippery ground. When the day's march is over one has to sit in a thoroughly clammy, rain-soaked tent, pitched on wet and sodden ground, waiting damply and impatiently for fires to be lit and appetite appeased. I know few things more depressing.

We soon accustomed ourselves, however, to all these little troubles; the increased weight of our tents was got over by making up an extra load for which the daily consumption of stores enabled us to arrange. Fortunately the rain, although it fell in deluges, and often lasted throughout the night, was not continuous, so that during a portion of the day bright intervals could be utilized for drying our belongings.

We made our machillas quite comfortable by placing our waterproof sheets inside, and over them our rugs; then, after getting in, the extra width was tucked over, keeping us warm and dry. For drying the interior of the tents we improvised a brazier, in which charred wood was burnt, and the sodden ground was covered with layers of leaves, over which were placed our waterproof ground sheets.

Firewood was always to hand, and though the actual lighting of a fire was often a work of some difficulty, and entailed the expenditure of a large number of matches, when once started it would burn merrily.

A further innovation was a hot breakfast daily on the line of march, which proved a great success; this,

## The Luambwa to the Difuna River

of course, entailed a longer breakfast halt, but as the days were now pleasantly cool there was no particular hurry to be in camp. "Cooky" came out strong, and I think really approved of the change; at any rate cold tea and hard boiled eggs, which did very well in the hot weather, became poor comfort in the wet, and we thoroughly enjoyed the change to omelettes, curry and rice, or liver and bacon with hot coffee. We always had a good fire lit for ourselves, at which the breakfast was cooked, and if wet the men would also start fires.

The real difficulties connected with travel in the rainy season arise from three sources—viz., the increased liability to sickness among the followers, the slow progress on the line of march which the slippery state of the tracks often entails; and lastly, swollen rivers which may easily necessitate a halt of some days' duration, until flood waters have subsided. In regard to all these matters luck was in our favour; the only river of importance we had to cross was the Mkushi, and we were over it just in time. I fancy that only two or three days later we should have had some trouble.

Our rate of progress did not vary appreciably, and falls were few; the native paths, which were but little used and often overgrown, were seldom really muddy or slippery; in the forests the soil was light and sandy, so that the water ran off quickly; in the dambos the marshes had not had time to get sodden.

Lastly, as regards our men, they stood the rain wonderfully well, so that very little extra sickness

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

was noticeable amongst them; there was a run certainly on the quinine supply, and instead of "hard stomach" the opposite prevailed, and opium pills were in request; but this I think was as much due to the fruit country we were entering as to the rain. At the same time we could not help feeling extremely sorry for the discomfort the men had to put up with; and though personally I think in a hot climate the absence of much clothing is on the whole beneficial, the sight of their shivering forms, clad only in calico rags, with perhaps a blanket over their shoulders, was most pathetic. The fact, however, that we were travelling in a forest country proved of benefit to them, for wood was always to hand.

The men were wonderfully expert at building themselves shelters. The moment we arrived at our journey's end, all those who were not required for the various duties connected with our camp, scattered among the trees, some looking for poles for uprights, others cutting and collecting leafy branches, or gathering long grass for thatching, the sound of the little wood-axes they carried reverberating from every direction.

Soon a row of comfortable looking huts would spring up as if by magic, from the tops of which smoke was not long in appearing. These shelters, which were built on exactly the same principle as a native hut, had of course no chimneys; and as about ten men lived in each, and in wet weather did all their cooking there, the atmosphere inside can be better imagined than described, for we never investigated one ourselves. Notwithstanding these



Our first Puku.

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drawbacks, the men liked them, as was proved by the amount of shouting and calling that was necessary to get them out when once comfortably established inside.

The nature of the country through which we were about to travel was of course quite unknown to us personally ; and Mr. Melland, who had never been in the district, had been unable to throw much light on the subject. We had made careful inquiries at every village, but had not, so far, succeeded in finding out anything very definite except that all the information we required could be obtained at Musiro village on the Congo-Serenje road.

Our map proved fairly reliable. It showed us that both the Luambwa and Mkushi rivers took their source in the Wulangulu Hills, and that consequently if we were able to follow their course we should travel to Mkushi almost as the crow flies. The distance from Musiro to Mkushi in a direct line is one hundred and five miles ; the journey at the rate of about fifteen miles a day would take us seven days from Musiro, and we ought therefore to reach Mkushi about the 28th November.

Beyond this the map told us nothing, and we had still to ascertain the direction of the paths, the location of the villages, the food supply likely to be available, as also the kind of country we should meet with in the Wulangulu Hills.

Under normal circumstances, all this information should have been easily obtainable, for the African native is, as a rule, thoroughly well acquainted with the district in which he lives. Unfortunately, the

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Alala tribe who inhabit the Luambwa valley were of a lower type than any natives—except perhaps the Achepeta—that we had hitherto met with in our African travels; so far as we could judge, their intellects were of the feeblest description. They seemed to have but little general knowledge of the country, and the “next village,” beyond which they had the greatest objection to travel, appeared to be their *ultima thule*. These stay-at-home habits may doubtless be traced to the days when the district was continually harried by their more warlike neighbours, the Angonies and Wawembe. They seemed to be hunters, yet could give no information about game. A—— met a man in the forest one afternoon returning to his village laden with honey and the meat of a freshly killed reedbuck, and several skins, among them a serval which he had speared. He at first promised great things, but soon contradicted himself, and though invited to camp, failed to turn up.

The men of the Alala tribe were not, as a rule, bad looking; and if Nature intends that their intellects should rise above their present level, peace, good government, contact with the world, and inducements to labour may in time improve them.

The district appeared to be sparsely inhabited, and the villages exclusively confined to the left bank of the Luambwa. Keeping villages to one side may be in the interest of forest preservation, or to facilitate the collection of hut-tax. There was but little cultivation, just a few clearings

## The Luambwa to the Difuna River

round the villages, consequently food supplies were scarce.

We were told that the natives were anxious to increase their area of cultivation, but that they were not allowed to do so by the authorities. If the story is true, the reason is probably as follows.

Forest tribes inclined to agriculture have migratory habits, owing to the fact that the natural fertility of forest lands is quickly exhausted. So soon as the productiveness of the soil shows signs of failing, the natives have to choose between a more careful system of cultivation, entailing, of course, harder work; or a move, bag and baggage, to a fresh clearing. As the burning of a clearing and the building of a new village are not difficult operations, if left to themselves, they generally choose the latter alternative.

These periodical migrations, if unchecked, result, of course, in the destruction of vast areas of forest; and it is consequently very possible that the authorities do, in the interest of forest preservation, put a stop to them.

We passed on the march deserted villages and tentative clearings; the latter were usually circular in shape, and all that remained above ground were the charred trunks of trees two or three feet in height. How long it takes for the roots to rot and for the clearings to be ready for tillage we cannot say.

The rain, which had lasted more or less all night, was falling in a steady Scotch mist-like drizzle when dawn broke on the 20th November, and not

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quite realizing that the wet season was really upon us, we stayed in bed in the hope that matters would mend.

At first the rest was pleasant enough, and a hot breakfast at a table quite a novelty ; but by degrees, a wet tent and the absence of anything to do palled, and we were not sorry when about 10 A.M. the clouds lifted, and we were able to make a move. We first took a bee-line by compass through the forest to cut off the corner which separated us from the Luambwa, and so soon as we reached the river, skirted its right bank. There was no track, but the men managed perfectly, nevertheless, the forest being rarely so thick as to oblige us to alight from the machillas. The river was of varying breadth—sixty or seventy yards—and in places deep, sometimes running between high wooded banks, and in others opening out with low banks bordered by marshes, then dry, and looking almost like water meadows. Of game we saw but little—only a few waterbuck and some puku.

The day proved fine and warm, and after four hours' travel we halted on the edge of a large dambo and camped in the forest. It was a nice spot, with plenty of flowering plants about. Maso helped me dig up some bulbs (*Kamferia*), but we found they grew so deep in hard ground it was almost impossible not to break the stems.

A disagreeable experience occurred to me on this day's march. I had been feeling rather out of sorts, probably owing to the damp and change of temperature, and had taken a doze of ipecacuanha

## The Luambwa to the Difuna River

over night to counteract any ill effects. This medicine disagreed, or perhaps the motion of the machilla caused it to disagree, for I was suddenly taken violently sick, and the machilla men, seeing something was wrong, stopped. I began to get out, but Franco, who always marched by the side of my machilla, fearing a fit, became much alarmed, seized me and held me fast, notwithstanding my struggles. This made me very angry, and so soon as speech was possible I said so; the sight must, however, have been rather comical. One of the men in great alarm ran forward to tell A—— that the "Donna," as they always called me, was very ill, and he, suspecting the cause, returned to find me, though still perturbed, distinctly better.

For a lady to leave a machilla with grace and ease, it is first necessary to stop the men and then make them lower the machilla and slightly raise the canopy, all of which takes time. At the critical moment I was unable to give any orders, hence complications.

The evening was fine, but a light rain fell all through the night (21st). We were able to get off early, and, following the course of the Luambwa river, reached after four hours' travel the point where the Congo-Serenje track—it cannot be dignified by the name of road—crosses the river, Musiro village being opposite us on the left bank. Our camp was pitched in the forest on the edge of a large dambo, which apparently stretched for miles and looked like a disused river bed, and which on our side was bordered by steep and rocky ground.

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We had passed through much attractive looking game country, but only saw a few puku and reed-buck; larger game should have been there, but alas! no one knew where it had gone.

The chief of the village was sent for, but he was apparently away. Two other men of the Alala tribe, however, appeared to represent him. These men were neatly dressed, wearing European shirts over their native clothes; they had nice manners, and were, I should say, good specimens of the Alala tribe.

They had recently returned from the mines, and had travelled from Mkushi to their village by the direct road—information we were glad to get as showing that there was in fact a road. They mentioned several villages that we should pass, and they also told us correctly the names of the rivers that run into the left bank of the Luambwa; but neither of them knew the name, nor would allow that there was a river running into the Luambwa on the right bank. This was puzzling, as the map showed one about a day's march to the southward of their village. Curiously enough, also, they could give us no information as to the Wulangulu Hills, whose name was quite unknown to them; this was annoying, as we were very anxious to find out the amount of difficulty there would be in crossing these mountains. We certainly anticipated a climb, if not as bad as that from Mua to the Dedza plateau, at any rate much the same as we had experienced in our rise from the Luangwa valley to the Muchinga plateau. To the best of my recollection, it was not

## The Luambwa to the Difuna River

until we had actually crossed the hills that the name Wulangulu was recognized.

When we came to inquire as to time and distance we realized to the full the feebleness of these men's intellects. With every desire to please, they were unable to make any distinction between a year and a day. Trying to pin them down to any period was hopeless; for instance, after much talking and explanation, they agreed that it might take a fortnight to get to Mkushi. The subject was then dropped, and five minutes later we suddenly asked them how long it had taken them to return from Mkushi to their village, and they answered without hesitation one day! There was no desire to deceive; it was mental incapacity pure and simple.

We invited them to come with us as guides, but they declined, stating, what we believe to have been the truth, that they were far too tired to start off again so soon; their fatigue was doubtless mental as much as physical.

That evening the thunder rumbled all round us, and we were treated to several light storms.

The following morning proving fine we were off betimes. Our map had hitherto been fairly reliable, and as native information was of the vaguest we decided to steer by compass through the forest, so as to cut off the large bend the river makes south of Musiro's village. This short cut succeeded better than short cuts generally do; we were able to travel most of the way in our machillas and struck the river after two hours'



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marching, the porters being close behind us with John in quite a cheerful mood. After breakfast we came upon a marsh, where men and women were fishing, and from these we learned that there was a village on the opposite bank in which grain could be bought. Musiro's village had been almost denuded of food; and as our men were in consequence short of supplies, we decided to stop and send representatives of the various messes to see what they could get. Instead of the half hour we expected to be delayed, we waited two solid hours, and then only got under way after great shouting and despatching of messengers. Fortunately the day was cool, and we were just as well under the trees as in our tents.

In less than an hour we reached a stream which, though then nearly dry, looked as if it could be dignified in the wet season by the name of river; and here A—— decided to halt, thinking it was the tributary of the Luambwa, which was the objective of our day's march. Next day we found out that we were mistaken, and that the real river was still about four miles further on.

Our camp, pitched on high ground overlooking the dry watercourse, was a nice one with a pretty view. That night it poured in torrents.

The dawn of the 28th broke in heavy rain, and we were unable to make a move before 10 A.M.; even then the conditions were far from promising. About an hour after starting we crossed a small river, fifteen to twenty yards broad, which was evidently the tributary of the Luambwa we thought we had



Three Hartebeest Shot near Bua River

[See p. 93]



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reached the day before. Soon afterwards a steady drizzle set in; it turned into a positive deluge and forced us to camp. This was the first time we had been caught by the rain in the open, and we did not like the experience. We ourselves kept fairly dry, remaining in our *machillas*, which were propped up under trees until the tents were pitched, but the wretched men were soaked, and many of the *machilla* boys cowered under the *machillas* to gain a little shelter from the pitiless rain. We were really sorry for the servants who had their work to do, notwithstanding the adverse circumstances; they never uttered a word of complaint, and were wonderfully cheerful.

The ground in and around the tent was covered with a thick layer of leaves, a brazier of hot embers placed inside, and large fires lit both in front and behind. It cleared towards evening, and we got our damp bedding dry. A—— went out and shot a couple of puku for the men, the last, I think, that we saw. The night was beautiful.

During the evening poor Maso complained of a very bad headache. I gave him Epsom salts, but next day he was no better, eating nothing and suffering intensely. A—— thought that he had probably contracted Kufoo<sup>1</sup> fever while scouring the country after our trunk, and John, who had had it twice, confirmed the diagnosis. Next day Maso managed to follow the caravan slowly, and came in about two hours after us.

24th.—The morning was fine, though cloudy.

<sup>1</sup> Also spelt N'Kufu.

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We followed the Luambwa until its junction with the Magangazi; here two natives, with dogs and spears, told us that their village was just opposite, and advised us to cross the river; this we did, at a place where it was full of water and the banks very steep. The village was built in a clearing, a quarter of a mile or so from the river bank. On the edge of the adjacent gardens we pitched our camp, getting our tents up just in time to avoid a heavy storm.

My diary has the entry "natives dull witted and no reliable information to be obtained." We learnt that the path led away from the Luambwa, and therefore insisted on being given a guide. To this there was at first some demur, and every possible excuse was made, but eventually a man was forthcoming on our promising to effect an exchange at the first village we reached, and the practice once established, we had no further trouble. The guide on arriving at a village, usually escorted by Saidi, ran in among the huts and soon returned with an exchange; he was quite satisfied with some salt or other small remuneration for his trouble. The next village appeared to be the end of the world to these people, and they had the greatest possible objection to being taken any further.

Poor Maso did not reach camp till late in the afternoon, looking very feeble. I had some hot porridge given him on arrival. He refused to remain in one of the villages until better, as we suggested; this was scarcely surprising, for these local natives were of a different race, spoke another

## The Luambwa to the Difuna River

language, and were complete strangers to him. He declared he was able to go on.

We started early on the 25th and camped about 11 A.M., half-way between the Kasenga and Difuna rivers. The morning was cloudy, but the day proved fine, and the warm sun enabled us to thoroughly dry our tents, clothes, and bedding for the first time for some days.

We were now well to the westward of the Luambwa, and the village near our camp was in Congo territory; at least we gathered that this was the case from the fact that the natives paid their hut-tax to Belgian officials. Our tents were pitched at the end of a large dambo, which A—— investigated in the afternoon, seeing much old spoor, but no game. The natives either could not or would not tell us the period of the year at which game actually frequented the neighbourhood.

The next day proved fine and warm. We made a longish march, following a well-marked track, rising gradually all the way. We travelled at a good pace, and about noon reached the Mua river, where we encamped; the altitude was four thousand three hundred feet.

Native paths are mostly bordered with shrubs. The reason for this is that the inhabitants on clearing a path lop off branches and hew down the trees, leaving three or four feet of trunk above ground. The old stems sprout afresh, forming, in the spring, shrubs of beautiful green foliage; they mostly bear enormous leaves from eight to twelve

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

inches long, consisting of four or six pairs of leaflets, each about two inches across.

We were generally made aware of the proximity of a village by these clearings in the forest, often followed by rough cultivated patches of ground. Women were seen working in these with their babies strapped to their backs, the poor little mites, bare-headed in the broiling sun, shaken by every movement of the mother. The wonder is how they could sleep, or even exist, under the circumstances. Nature must provide a thick covering for the little brains to prevent them being literally roasted out.

The country through which we had travelled was interesting. We crossed both the Difuna and Kiamanda rivers. The former flowed through a marshy valley, and had but little water in it. The latter ran through a rocky gorge with finely wooded banks, and had a rough bridge built across ten feet or so above the water.

The relative positions of the Difuna and Kiamanda rivers are either incorrectly shown on the map, or, what is more probable, the Kiamanda river is entirely omitted, and the river marked by that name is in reality the one locally known as the Mua.

We passed two villages, and noticed that the women wore close fitting beaded caps which gave them a quaint appearance, the married women being distinguished by a metal disc, the size of a half-crown piece, inserted in their upper lips, which greatly disfigured them. The unmarried girls were not bad looking.

## The Luambwa to the Difuna River

On the road we met some wild looking men whose only garment consisted of a piece of bark cloth. This cloth was a good deal used in the neighbourhood. It is said to last only a short time.

We were in some anxiety respecting Maso, who failed to turn up, but hoped he had taken shelter in a village. Although, as far as we knew, there were no lions or leopards in these parts, there were probably hyenas, and these animals when hungry are dangerous brutes to tackle. It frequently happens that natives lying asleep get badly bitten in the face. Towards nightfall it began to rain heavily, and continued all night.

We woke up on the 27th to find ourselves surrounded by a thick Scotch mist, which delayed our departure until 7 A.M. Our route, following the course of the Mua river (probably the Kiamanda marked on the map), ascended gradually to its marshy head waters. We camped about noon in a bit of dry forest not far from a small village, the last on the north side of the hills.

The scenery was fine. The forest-covered hillsides, tall trees in beautiful foliage, quick-running streams of clear water, bogs, rocks, and abundance of wild flowers reminded us of Scotland. Fir trees and heather were alone wanting to complete the resemblance.

Before starting that morning A—— had sent Roberti back to take charge of Maso and bring him on so soon as he was fit to travel. Natives are curious creatures, and, like animals, have very little



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

feeling for the sick. Roberti, though he was by way of being Maso's great friend, and hailed from the same village, objected strongly to return, and only went under protest.

To our great surprise Maso and Roberti turned up during the afternoon. The former, having been unable to overtake us the previous evening, had passed the night in the forest in drenching rain without food or fire. The man's vitality must have been extraordinary; for, notwithstanding this experience, Roberti met him struggling gamely along the path, hoping still to overtake us. He had a good deal of fever, so we gave him Warburg's tincture; and as he was quite unfit to walk, a machilla was improvised with grass rope slung on a pole, and two spare men were told off to carry him till he was better. Later Maso was able to get out and walk a little, and in a few days no longer required the machilla. The men carried him grudgingly, and only after various pains and penalties had been threatened in the event of disobedience to our orders. One day, just as I was about to start in my machilla, John came to me to say that the porters refused to carry Maso. A—— and most of the carriers with their loads had already gone on, so it was a bit awkward. I asked which men had refused. One delinquent was brought forward and harangued, John being interpreter. I asked how he would like to be ill in a strange country and unable to walk, etc. He was still obstinate. Fortunately at that moment I caught sight of one of the porters just starting with his load. He was

## The Luambwa to the Difuna River

recalled and told that the "Donna" would give him 2s. to carry Maso into Mkushi, and that this sum would be deducted from the wage of the insubordinate native. This settled it. The Mwembe had no wish to part with 2s. out of the 7s. which would be due to him on arrival at Broken Hill, and consented to return to his duty. The other shirker, who had heard all the argument and was actually shouldering my machilla, was relieved and told to assist his fellow. The trouble was not the weight, the machilla being only of grass, and hanging on a single pole. Maso was also so small that he could not have weighed seven stone, but they considered it was beneath their dignity to carry a black man.

Natives will take orders from the headman, but from no other black. On one occasion the cook was grumbling that he had no water and was short of fuel. In John's absence I told Franco to order some of the men to fetch both. He did so, but no notice was taken. Franco said, "They pay no attention because I am a black man like themselves." I said, "Very well; tell them if they pay no attention to a black man, they will have a white woman after them." This was repeated, and had the desired effect.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### MKUSHI TO BROKEN HILL—VILLAGE FESTIVITIES— TORRENTIAL RAINS—A “HUNGRY” ROAD.

THE morning of the 28th was fine, and we were off ~~bet~~imes, with a native from the village to guide us over the hills. The path, which we were glad to find was nowhere unduly steep, led us up gradually through grand and varied scenery, at one time winding its way through dark patches of forest, at another skirting marshy valleys, or crossing one of the many streams of clear running water which were rushing rapidly northwards to swell the Luambwa river, and eventually the mighty Congo. Towards the summit we reached a more open country, with rocky slopes and great grey lichen-covered boulders, whence we had a distant view of the Irumi Mountains, whose huge, perpendicular-looking escarpments stood out boldly against the western skyline.

All around us were tree lilies (*villagia splendens*), all in bloom: charming white or pale mauve flowers and long, narrow, reed-like leaves growing in bunches on a black, fibrous stalk which looked like the stem of a tree fern.

We were greatly struck with the beauty of these forest-clad hills and green valleys, stretching for miles on either side of us. A charming glade



Sable Antelope.

[See p. 94.



## Mkushi to Broken Hill

some thousand feet below us, in which nestled an island of palms and other trees, was suddenly revealed through an opening in the forest. This glade looked as if it had been expressly laid out by nature to be the foreground of the highland chateau of some future millionaire, who in days to come may elect to settle amid these beautiful surroundings.

Our inspection of the Wulangulu Hills was a cursory one indeed, but it led us to think that there was in and around them a glorious country well fitted to be the home of a thriving white population.

Unfortunately it came on to pour with rain shortly before we reached the summit of the pass, and it was consequently under somewhat depressing circumstances that we crossed the watershed which separates the basin of the Zambesi and the Congo. The altitude was about five thousand five hundred feet, and we estimated that the cliffs on either side of us rose three or four hundred feet higher. On the southern side the descent was very gradual, and our path led us—so far as we could see for the pouring rain—along what might almost be described as a succession of broad terraces, on which were growing rows and rows of wild fruit trees. They seemed to have been planted by nature to resemble the trees in an orchard. Oval wild cherries and round purple plums just ripe, with green kernels and a peculiar aromatic flavour not unpleasant to taste, abounded; as also a fruit, looking like a crab apple, with four large seeds inside, soft yellow flesh, and

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

the taste of a medlar, in which the natives delighted. The fruit grew in bunches on a tree with large leaves resembling those of a magnolia, locally known as msuko (*uapaca kirkiana*). It is to be found all over Rhodesia and right down to the coast.

At the first break in the rain we stopped for breakfast; and while eating, seated on the driest rocks we could find, our men scattered all over the country-side collecting fruit, so that there was some difficulty in getting them together again when it was time to move on. Soon afterwards we struck the head waters of the Mkushi river—in the prevailing weather already a strong stream ten yards or more in breadth—and after crossing followed its course southwards, until about 11 A.M. we reached the first North-West Rhodesian village.

The natives were very pleased to see us, and were more intelligent than those who lived on the other side of the hills. The chief came to call, and later in the day a number of women—who would have been nice-looking but for the disfiguring lip ornament—arrived with eggs, chickens, a fair amount of flour, and small baskets of dried beans, which they bartered for salt and calico.

Towards evening a woman appeared, a most curious-looking object, seemingly for some reason or other very shy. She wore the usual dress, but her head and shoulders were covered with white wood ashes, and in her hand she had a grass petticoat and some dried seed vessels threaded together, which we discovered later were anklets. She was accompanied by two lads, her sons, carrying native

## Mkushí to Broken Hill

drums. John, who introduced her to us, explained that she was a "medicine" woman, and that with our kind permission she would proceed to dance. We readily gave consent, on which she put on her petticoat and anklets and commenced, to the accompaniment of her two sons, who, getting astride their drums, beat them loudly with their hands. The noise soon attracted not only all our men, but pretty well the whole village, including the chief, who, displacing one of the sons, beat the larger of the two drums with the greatest vigour. Franco, who as the brother of a chief should know, told us that the office of head drummer was one of a chief's most highly-prized privileges; and however that may be, this chief certainly made the most of his opportunity. Greater zeal and energy in the performance of his task I have never seen.

The dancing, which was of a high class order, to judge from the pleasure and excitement depicted on the black faces in the half-moon surrounding the performers, consisted of the usual pacings and shakings. The "medicine" lady was assisted by quite a number of other women, who would rush out in relays from among the spectators, dance until they were exhausted, and then retire to recruit, being replaced at once by a fresh batch equally anxious to distinguish themselves. How long the performance would have lasted it is impossible to say; for, though the chief was developing unmistakable signs of apoplexy, the leading lady herself had not—to use a colloquialism—turned a hair. A thunderstorm, however, that had been



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

brewing during the festivities suddenly burst, and saved the situation as far as we were concerned.

We purchased the larger of the drums as a memento of the scene, and sent both the chief and the lady home rejoicing with a suitable present. John told us that the office of "medicine" woman was a hereditary one, and that rain-making was included in her duties.

The early morning of the 29th November proved very damp, and we were consequently a little late in starting. We wanted to follow the big Mkushi river, but were told that this was not possible, probably because there were no villages along its course.

Our objective was the little Mkushi river, and the march proved a long one. We passed a large village about 11 A.M., but did not halt—though our people wanted us to do so—as it was still too early in the day. A second village was reached about 1 P.M.; to our annoyance this was deserted, the waterholes being dry notwithstanding the rain. We had consequently to go on, and did not arrive at the little Mkushi until 2 P.M.

Our camp was well situated amidst pretty surroundings, and though no game was to be seen, we saw fresh spoor, and a herd of eland was reported. Heavy rain came on just after pitching camp and again in the evening, and lasted all night. We had fires lit at both ends of our tents, and even then had great difficulty in keeping out the wet.

Maso was distinctly better to-day. Warburg's tincture had evidently suited him.

## Mkushí to Broken Hill

On the 30th November the morning proved so wet that we did not start till after breakfast. According to our usual practice, A—— went on ahead, leaving me to follow at the head of the caravan. Practically everything was ready for a move at the time of his departure, so I was able to start five minutes or so after he had left; but by this time he had disappeared in the forest, and through some mistake both guides had followed him without his knowledge. "Cooky" was with me, and notwithstanding his experiences on the road to Fort Melangani, he still delighted in doing guide. Just beyond the point where the path entered the forest a tree had fallen across it, and round this tree A——'s machilla men had made a *détour*, regaining the track on the far side. "Cooky" perforce noticed that the machilla had turned off, but for some reason or other best known to himself, made up his mind that, instead of returning to the path, it had gone straight on, and acting on this supposition, he took a bee-line into the forest, following what he supposed to be its tracks. I foolishly came after him at the head of the caravan, instead of sending on ahead to reconnoitre, the result being that we soon found ourselves wandering aimlessly about in the dry bush, looking for tracks which were not there.

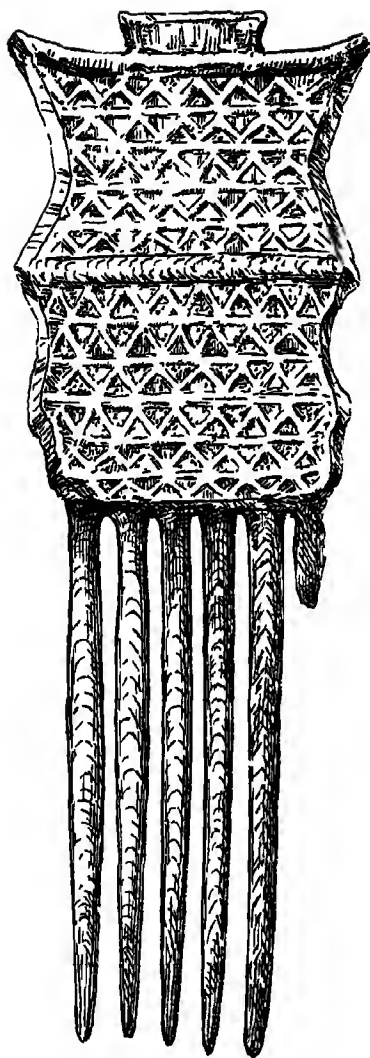
After about three-quarters of an hour wasted in this way I insisted on retracing our steps towards the dambo and our former camping ground. Meanwhile A——, after marching for an hour, had sat down by the side of the road to wait for me, and

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

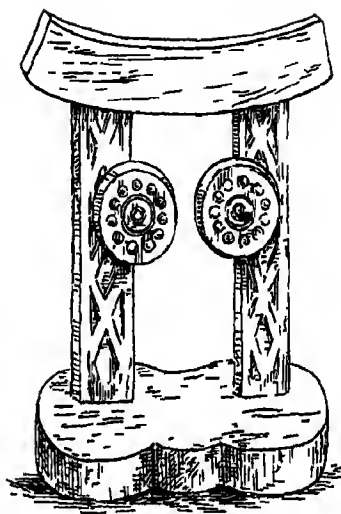
being surprised that I was not in sight, had sent messenger after messenger to find out what was causing the delay. One of these messengers overtook me just as we were about to regain the camping ground, put us quickly on the right road, and guided us to the place where A—— was waiting; not, as may be supposed, well pleased with his two hours' unnecessary detention. "Cooky" discreetly remained in rear. His imagination told him the kind of remarks with which he would be greeted.

Later in the day we passed a curious landmark, a large bare rock, some two hundred feet in height, rising sheer out of the ground for no apparent reason. We also met a fine looking native chief carrying a spear and a carved pillow or stool. He was draped in a blanket, and had his hair neatly plaited. I asked to be allowed to buy the native pillow, but he refused to part with it. I suppose he was in no need of money, and probably would have missed his piece of furniture. One could not but admire the man's dignity and simplicity. The previous day a native had been induced to sell me the small carved wooden comb he was wearing; it is of peculiar design, and at first sight might be mistaken for tortoise shell from its polished appearance.

We reached the Mkushi-Serenje road in the early afternoon, and then learnt to our great disgust that we had struck it a day's march to the eastward of the river, and were consequently a day behind time. Why we had not been allowed to follow the



NATIVE COMB, CARVED WOOD,  
NATURAL SIZE, (P. 232.)



NATIVE PILLOW, CARVED WOOD,  
8 IN. HIGH. (P. 232.)



## Mkushi to Broken Hill

course of the big Mkushi river in the first instance, or at any rate the little Mkushi, we never made out.

To add to our annoyance, the main road we had now reached proved worse than the previous tracks. Whenever a delay had occurred we had always said: "Well, at any rate, on nearing Mkushi we shall be able to get along in fine style." Here at last was the road, and we found it in no better order than the paths. The forest had, of course, been cleared to the breadth of the roadway, but the road itself was overgrown, all in ruts, and far harder to follow than the tracks we now regretted.

We chose a camp not far from a village on the outskirts of a dambo. The night was very wet. These villagers evidently disliked travellers, possibly because they saw too many of them. No flour was brought for sale, and when morning came, the guide, promised by the chief, failed to appear; but as we had to get on, the old chief was sent for and told that he would have to show us the way himself. This produced the desired effect, for before we had gone a quarter of a mile several volunteers overtook us, one of whom conducted us safely to our destination.

We reached the Mkushi in due course, to find it a broad river filling rapidly. However, aided by a number of rocks which came in as stepping-stones, we got over without great difficulty, and ascended the hill leading to the boma. Here we suffered a great disappointment. The place was like Nawalia, a city of the dead. It was empty, the houses in ruins—not even a cat to be seen.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

To make matters worse, somebody knew that there was a place called New Mkushi, and suggested that it was only a mile or so ahead. On we went to reconnoitre, but soon realized that we were following a will-o'-the-wisp, so returned to the neighbourhood of the old boma and pitched our camp. Our disappointment was great. Supplies were running short, and the hope of purchasing sundry creature comforts for ourselves and food for our men was dashed to the ground. We had expected letters; and had been given to understand that though there was no white official, the native in charge would be able to give us reliable information as to the road to Broken Hill.

We found out subsequently that the boma had been moved to a new site, hence the neglected state of the road we had passed. News of this change had apparently not been communicated to Mpika.

The remainder of our journey passed without untoward incidents. We left Mkushi on the morning of the 2nd December, and reached Broken Hill the morning of the 7th, a day sooner than we expected.

The rain came down daily, or rather nightly, but only caused us serious inconvenience on the morning of our departure from Mkushi. It had rained heavily all night, and there was a light drizzle still falling when we started at 6 A.M.

About an hour later it came on to pour, and soon afterwards the rain fell in such deluges—veritable sheets of rain—that the weight of A——'s machilla



Nyasaland Porters with their Loads.

[Su. p. 97



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## Mkushi to Broken Hill

on the slippery ground was more than the team could manage; the road became a torrent, and further progress impossible. The machillas were put under trees and propped up by forked poles, so that notwithstanding the deluge we kept fairly dry. The men, shivering with cold, got under them or crouched wherever shelter offered itself. The porters soon came up, their loads saturated, and these we stacked under the best available trees.

To keep the men warm we sent them to cut and collect wood, and by degrees large fires were lit, around which they cowered in comparative comfort. So soon as the weather moderated—and it cleared in about two hours—"Cooky" set to work and gave us breakfast in our machillas; and by the time we had done eating the sun came out and we were able to continue our journey. It was curious to see how quickly all traces of rain disappeared in the sandy soil of the forest.

The aspect of the country was unchanged. We passed from forest to dambo and from dambo to forest; the dambos greener, it is true, the forests more in leaf, but otherwise differing in no respect from those we had hitherto traversed.

The marshes were becoming sodden, and the rivers filling rapidly. The last we had to cross, the Lusenfa, was in flood. In the middle was an island dividing it into two channels. On the near side the channel was broken up by large boulders which acted as stepping-stones, and over these we clambered without difficulty. On the far side, the channel, which was deep and rapid, was

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

bridged by three poles loosely tied together, and across these I pushed myself, assisted by Franco and "Cooky," and encouraged by A——, who was sitting on the far bank enjoying the scene. The position was not altogether a pleasant one, for the water was swirling past just below my feet, and ten yards farther on there was a fall and a deep pool. I was thankful to be safely across.

Natives are not troubled with nerves, and the porters made no fuss crossing with their loads. The little goat came over by himself.

We lunched on the far bank under a tree, while Roberti was sent back to assist Maso over, he being about half an hour behind. After traversing a wide plain we camped in a wood a mile from the river.

The road, as I have mentioned, was in bad order, so that it was not until we reached the post-road three hours short of Broken Hill that our teams were able to materially increase their speed. Of all the "hungry" roads this was the "hungriest"—there was simply nothing. We passed but few villages, and these were denuded of food supplies. For ourselves we could only rarely purchase a fowl or a few eggs. Fortunately the obliging manager of the A.L.C. store at Broken Hill, to whom we had written from Mpika, sent us out a couple of runners with some much appreciated stores. For the men there was practically no grain, an occasional small bowl of flour to keep the servants alive was all that was procurable. They all, with the exception of John, Franco, and "Cooky" and his

## Mkushi to Broken Hill

assistants, whom we helped from our store, subsisted practically on the fruit of Msuko tree, which was, fortunately, to be found in abundance along the route.

This fruit gathering was rather demoralizing to discipline. As soon as a tree was sighted, off went machilla boys, gun-bearers, porters, and though we were never actually put down to rest, the reliefs were never forthcoming when called for. The loads were dumped down freely, much to poor John's trouble and annoyance. Saidi's wiry little body and thin legs, encased in blue putties, carrying a sixteen pound rifle, dashing in and out among the trees, or rushing to overtake A——'s machilla, was a sight to behold. One day there was nearly a row. The Nyasaland boys were by way of being virtuously indignant at the Mpika's boys' habit of putting down loads to gather fruit. Roberti, who happened for some reason or other to be behind, found the ammunition box abandoned by the side of the road, and thinking that as a gun-bearer the matter specially concerned him, sat down by it till its carrier returned and then chastized him. The Mpika boy never thought of retaliating, but set up a howl and ran after A——'s machilla to complain, picking up sympathisers on the way. Oil had, of course, to be thrown on the troubled waters, and Roberti was suitably admonished. He was rather a smart looking fellow, and hated the Wawembe, speaking of them in a most contemptuous way. He had his revenge, however. The Mpika porter turned up next morning with a violent pain in his inside and asked for internal remedies. The necessary medicine was, of course,

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

administered, but before getting it he received a long lecture on the sin of gluttony, with special reference to the still more heinous offence of abandoning a load on the line of march, to the evident satisfaction of Roberti, who was looking on. The machilla capitao, anxious to befriend his compatriot, suggested it was not gluttony but the somewhat unkind hand of the Almighty One that had done the mischief to the porter's inside. His religious doubts were, however, apparently satisfied by the assurance that it was no unkind hand that had dealt out the pain, but the hand of a benevolent and far-seeing Providence striving by the means of the stomach to bring an erring porter back to the path of duty.

We were not now looking out for game, and saw but a few reedbuck and a herd of hartebeest grazing placidly by the Mkushi river. There was, however, a certain amount of fresh spoor—always a pleasant sign—and both sable and kudu cows were reported by our men. We passed a party of travellers marching to Tanganyika, who kindly gave us some coffee, our supply having run out, and they mentioned they had seen and shot the commoner sorts of antelope.

On the 6th, as soon as we were established in our camp, "Cooky" who knew Broken Hill, announced that the station was not far off, and in anticipation of our getting in next day a great cleaning and washing of clothes and general furbishing took place, so that we might make a fairly presentable appearance on arrival.

On the morning of the 7th we completed our



John, Franco, and Machilla Team.

[See p. 97.]



## Mkushi to Broken Hill

last stage, and being on a real road once more, we went along in fine style, uphill and down dale. "Cooky," still delighting in the rôle of guide, assured us that we should see the settlement from the summit of every succeeding rise we topped. As a matter of fact, it took exactly an hour and a half before signs of a house appeared in the forest, and then we suddenly found ourselves inside the station. I was quite sorry to get out for the last time from the machilla in which I had covered over one thousand miles, and to realize that our journey, which had lasted sixteen weeks since leaving Blantyre, eight weeks from Fort Jameson and six weeks from Mpika, was really at an end.



## CHAPTER XVII.

BROKEN HILL TO BEIRA—TRAVELLING BY TRAIN—  
VICTORIA FALLS—ON THE SEA ONCE MORE.

THE station of Broken Hill, situated as it is in mid forest, with trees growing right to the edge of the compounds, looked pretty and well kept.

The then terminus of the Rhodesian Railway was in more open country, about a mile and a half from the residential part of the town, and opposite a copper mine and the hill which gives its name to the place. In this hill is a very ancient cave with curious fossil remains, but we had not time to visit it.

The manager of the African Lakes Company placed an empty bungalow at our disposal, and here we established ourselves. Our tents and machillas, and such camp equipment as we could spare, were carried direct to the company's stores and delivered to the manager, as also all heads and skins intended for despatch to England. As regards these, a number of formalities have to be complied with, including a thorough disinfection, which takes some time.

Travellers should be careful how they send their property home through the Mozambique Company's territory. Our trophies were nearly seized by the Portuguese at Beira for want of a proper certificate

## Broken Hill to Beira

of origin, and we were put to considerable expense in consequence. Why the African Lakes Company did not know of these requirements we never made out.

Our first morning was occupied reading our letters and newspapers, of which a huge pile awaited us. The tin-roofed house felt somewhat hot and stuffy after so many months of tent life, and even a heavy thunderstorm that broke over the station that evening failed to bring the temperature below 70° F.

In the afternoon we paid off our Kopa boys, and as they had done very well, sent the chief a suitable present by his brother. We also gave our Mpika boys their "posho" for the return journey and started them off on their homeward way.

The whole of the 8th was devoted to business, and a hard day it was, packing for our railway journey, discarding worn-out clothes, cleaning rifles, settling up with the African Lakes Company, and last, but not least, paying off our Nyasaland boys, and providing them with "posho" in money and kind for their six weeks' return march.

We were rather at a loss to know what to do for a cook, as until Livingstone no food was provided on the train. "Cooky" would have come with us but for the fact that the whole party wanted to travel home together, and this would have delayed their departure for a week. At the last moment old Saidi volunteered to come in the capacity of cook, and a very good one he proved

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

to be. He had suddenly discovered that he wanted to see the Victoria Falls, and that afterwards he would like to earn six months' wages at Buluwayo before returning to Nyasaland.

Our train left at 10 A.M. on the 9th December, 1908. All our boys came with us to the station to see us off, looking sad and depressed at the idea that their job was really over and their employers departing. After they had each been given a fortnight's wages as a parting gift I took a photograph of them assembled on the platform. Unfortunately, photographs of black men seldom do them justice; their naturally ugly features are reproduced in the pictures without the jovial expression and the shiny black skins which make their countenances pleasant and animated.

We parted with sincere regret, and retain the pleasantest recollection of their service and attention during the four months they were with us. John was a capital fellow, and knew his work well; a bit lazy at times, perhaps, and requiring a firm hand over him, but full of humour. The way he chuckled and said, "Oh, Bwana!" whenever his master said anything to tickle his fancy invariably made me laugh. He was recommended to us by the African Lakes Company as a reliable man to conduct our caravan through Africa, and we may therefore presume that his Nyasaland character was a good one. In North-East Rhodesia it transpired that he had had a "past," though what that "past" was we never ascertained. However that may be, he took us safely from Blantyre to Broken Hill. He

## Broken Hill to Beira

never lost any of our property, and was strictly honest so far as we could judge. He was, besides, a bit of a sportsman and a good skinner.

"Cooky" was first-rate, except when acting in the capacity of guide; and Franco was, I think, the best personal servant we ever had.

The train, composed of the usual corridor carriages, was comfortable enough. Every evening at 6 o'clock we halted for the night, starting again at 6 A.M. punctually. The first day's travel was through the usual forest, the second day the country became more open and veldt like, and on the third day we entered a settled district with farms, wagons, cattle and horses—quite strange beasts to us, after so many months in the "fly" belt. At the stations we were able to buy eggs and chickens from the natives, and later on fresh vegetables.

So soon as the train stopped for the night Saidi lit a fire by the side of the track and cooked our dinner, which we ate in an empty compartment. The second evening we had the pleasure of the company of a North-West Rhodesian official, who gave us much interesting information about his part of the country.

At 4 P.M. on the 12th, after a fairly rapid drop from the plateau into the Zambesi valley, we reached Livingstone, the seat of the North-West Rhodesian administration, a neat and pretty town as far as we could see. The station was crowded with all sorts of people, among them well-dressed English ladies. Evidently the arrival of a train

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

from the North is the occasion for a fashionable gathering.

The local train which was to take us across the river was waiting to start on another line, so we had only just time to shift our belongings and wish good-bye to old Saidi, who had donned his Tam o' Shanter of many colours in honour of the occasion. We steamed slowly over the fine suspension bridge standing high above the gorge through which the Zambesi runs, getting our first view of the Falls as we crossed, and reached in about ten minutes the gates of the Victoria Falls Hotel, where the train stopped to let us get out, for we were the only passengers.

The hotel, which stands in well-kept grounds, was most comfortable, and the sitting-room, bedroom, and bath room we were given in the "annexe" seemed most luxurious after so many months of camp life. It was very hot, however, and that night the mosquitoes hummed merrily.

In the cool of the evening we walked down to see the Falls, and got very wet from the spray which rises in clouds and drenches any one not provided with macintoshes and umbrellas. The vegetation wherever this spray falls is wonderful; maiden hair ferns in abundance, and overhead tall palms and other trees, all a vivid green. There is an excellent path which leads through the bush along the river bank, with here and there points of vantage from which one can see the river and the Falls.

I will not attempt to describe the Falls, which

## Broken Hill to Beira

take some time to see properly, except to say that they run slantways across the river for about a mile, and that the water dashes down into a deep, narrow, winding gorge or cañon, which unfortunately is so situated as to prevent one seeing the whole volume of falling water at any one time. For this reason—in my opinion, at least—the Victoria Falls, though perhaps more interesting, are not so impressive as the Falls of Niagara.

We joined the Livingstone-Cape Town "train de luxe" at noon on the 13th, and were deposited at Bulawayo next morning. Here we changed into the Salisbury train and reached that town at 8 A.M. on the 15th. The growing prosperity of the country, as seen from the railway, impressed us as being very remarkable.

Salisbury, the seat of the Southern Rhodesian administration, is a well-built town, with some good shops and a comfortable hotel, where we remained two nights waiting for the Beira express. Unfortunately, A—— was laid up with a sharp attack of influenza, so that we were unable to go on any expeditions.

The sight of a coach drawn by twenty-four mules, with one black man to drive, and another to wield the whip, was an interesting novelty, as also the wagons drawn by sixteen donkeys, and the two-wheeled Cape carts with their teams of four mules.

We left Salisbury at noon on the 18th, reaching the edge of the high veldt just after dark. In the morning we found ourselves on the Pungwe, and by 11 A.M. in Beira. The town—in Portuguese territory

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

administered by the Mozambique Company—is on a spit of sand at the mouth of the Pungwe river. There is one long street laid down with narrow lines on which small four-wheeled trolleys, for goods or passengers, are run; on each side are private houses, stores, and a few shops. Every house-owner has his own covered trolley, which is propelled by native runners. Ordinary wheeled traffic is impossible on account of heavy sand. Beira is considered a healthy spot, far more so than the adjacent coast. The harbour has considerable wharf accommodation, though not for ocean-going steamers.<sup>1</sup>

The hotel, run by a British Colonial, was comfortable and well arranged, but entirely deficient of any apparatus for combating the heat—a somewhat serious defect in a place like Beira. Soon after our arrival the sea breeze dropped, and the air grew stiller and hotter as the day went on. That night was one of the most oppressive we ever experienced. Bed was almost impossible on account of the heat, and the balcony equally so on account of the mosquitoes. An extra large variety is bred in this neighbourhood. We wondered whether this was the usual Beira summer weather, and if we should survive to embark. Our luck was on the mend, however; for dawn broke in heavy clouds, the

<sup>1</sup> Arrangements are being made for the construction of a deep water wharf by the Beira Junction Railway Company. This work has been already begun. It is believed that when completed this port will be equal to the increased business anticipated.



Women bringing Water to Camp from Waterholes.

[See p. 136.]





## Broken Hill to Beira

wind rose, and by mid-day it was blowing a hurricane from the south-east, with torrents of rain which quickly cooled the air.

The second night at the hotel was pleasant enough, and when we embarked on the D. O. A. L. *Princessin* on the morning of the 21st December, though the sky was still overcast and rain falling at intervals, fortune continued to favour us; the wind dropped as rapidly as it had risen, and we started that afternoon on our homeward voyage by the east coast route under the most favourable conditions of wind and weather.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

SPORT AND IMPRESSIONS OF NORTH-EAST RHODESIA,  
BY COLONEL COLVILLE, C.B.

THE journey from Mpika to Broken Hill was, I think, in many ways the most interesting portion of our expedition. The country we passed through was less travelled by Europeans than any other part of Africa we had yet visited. The natives were less accustomed to the white man and his ways, and consequently quite unsophisticated; their feeble minds caused us some irritation, but the fact that their intellects had remained at a low plane made them interesting studies.

The endless forests, the big rivers, the Lukulu with its primitive crossing, the large flats stretching away towards Lake Bangwelo, the Wulangulu Hills, all left definite impressions on our minds. The mere fact of being in the centre of the great Dark Continent lent a sense of distance and isolation to our position; and the slight flavour of exploration, with its concomitant uncertainties, supplied a zest which greatly enhanced its interest.

Want of time, the almost total absence of animal or bird life, and worry with our porters detracted somewhat from the pleasure of the journey. The first cause prevented us from visiting Lake Bangwelo, and from making a closer investigation of the

## Impressions of North-East Rhodesia

many points of interest our route offered ; the second spoiled the trip from a sporting point of view, and tended to render somewhat monotonous the forests and dambos through which we passed morning after morning in never-ending succession.

The third cause was a serious drawback. The general inefficiency and "cussedness"—for want of a better word—of our Mpika porters caused us constant anxiety and worry ; so the feeling of interest and comradeship which the African traveller always tries to have for his black companions was in their case impossible.

When we reached Mpika the efficient labour supply of the year had been pretty well exhausted ; the men we got were for the most part the dregs of the labour market, the ne'er-do-wells, the weaklings, the sick, and others who, not having earned their hut-tax for the year, were persuaded by their village chiefs to make a final effort to retrieve their position. Had we reached Mpika earlier in the season we should have found an ample supply of excellent boys available.

Our visit to North-East Rhodesia was an after-thought, consequently we made no previous inquiries as to transport matters, the first question a traveller usually ascertains. The ease with which we had obtained porters throughout Nyasaland may have made us somewhat careless, so that at Fort Jameson we had merely asked the class of carrier we should get at Mpika ; and being assured that there were no better ones in Africa, we were entirely satisfied.

The occupations of the African native of the

## A Thousand Miles in a Mchilla

male sex in the old days were war, hunting, and the herding of cattle. His excitements, the visits of slave raiders, executions, tortures, and an occasional epidemic. The rest of his days he spent placidly sunning himself outside his kraal; his womenkind doing such little agricultural labour as was necessary to supply his food, so that actual work was to him unknown. The white man's advent altered all this, put an end to the inter-tribal wars, and assured the natives of reasonable security for their persons and property. In return for these benefits the Government insisted, and rightly, on the annual payment of a hut-tax. Every adult native has to pay a few shillings annually for the hut in which he lives; and though in some cases the tax is paid in kind, it is more generally paid in cash, and this cash, unless he is a cattle owner or agriculturist, he has to earn by some form of labour.

The payment of this hut-tax is therefore the African native's primary incentive to labour, and so soon as it is paid he is at liberty to return to his village and spend the rest of the year in peaceful contemplation as heretofore. He has, however, other inducements, such, for instance, as the purchase of a wife from her parents or of cattle in cattle countries.

In the black man's land there is no equivalent to the system of courtship which precedes marriage in most white communities; the matter is merely one of sale and purchase. The would-be husband goes to the father of the girl, the father names his price, and the young man has to produce the cash



Kambiri and Wives.

[See p. 140.]



## Impressions of North-East Rhodesia

or the cattle before he gets his bride. How things were managed in the old days we cannot say. Amongst the warlike tribes a successful raid probably contributed a *quid pro quo*: the young man now has a less dangerous if less exciting method. He simply leaves his village in search of work, and does not return until he has the price of No. 1 wife in his belt; when his means and position entitle him to purchase a second, off he goes again with the laudable object of earning the purchase-money. In fact, he is beginning to learn that whenever he wants money for any purpose he has only to go to the nearest boma, and he will easily get work.

### LABOUR MARKET.

At Mpika, and subsequently, we examined to the best of our ability the conditions that governed the labour supply in that part of the country; and as these conditions apply pretty generally to porter transport throughout Africa, we will give the result of our investigations, in the hope that the information we gained may be of use to others.

The absence of other distractions—such as wars—has induced in many cases a liking for work and a desire to amass money, the result being that nearly every district has now more or less labour available, the amount depending on the time of year and the extent of the population, the nature of work they are willing to undertake, and lastly on the calls of the local labour market. We will now examine these conditions as applied to the Mpika district.



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

First, the time of year. It is only necessary to point out that considerably more labour will naturally be available before the hut-tax has been paid than after.

Second, the population. The Mpika district is peopled principally by the Wawembe tribe. The true Wawembe live to the northward of Mpika, the Kazembe district being the real headquarters of the tribe. The natives to the westward and southward of Mpika are not, we understand, true Wawembe, but a less pure race that has intermarried with inferior peoples.

The Wawembe are a fine manly warrior tribe, good workers, well inclined to labour, and willing to undertake any kind of work. Officials speak of them in the highest terms; they are also well thought of as soldiers, a battalion of African Rifles being largely recruited from amongst them. They are, on the other hand, very independent, and as they have never been conquered by the white man, apt to be troublesome, impatient of control, and inclined to truculence. We heard at Broken Hill that many men of the Wawembe tribe engaged in constructing the railway had been a thorn in the side of the contractors. Our porters, who for the most part were drawn from villages to the westward of Mpika, and consequently were not true Wawembe, had nevertheless inherited the troublesome peculiarities of the superior race, without their compensating good qualities. As regards actual numbers we cannot speak, but the tribe is a large one.

In addition to the Wawembe, the Lake dwellers

## Impressions of North-East Rhodesia

of Bangwelo are also included in the Mpika district. Of these we know nothing, but we were told that they were useless as porters, though useful for agricultural purposes. While in this connection we may mention that certain tribes, mostly large cattle owners, such as the Masai in East Africa, will not undertake manual labour of any sort, though they will work as shepherds and herdsmen.

Lastly, as regards the calls on the local labour market, these are especially heavy, for the sparseness of population and the low state of intelligence of the natives in the Serenje district admit of very little labour being drawn from that part of the country, so much so that the Local Government is unable to assist travellers other than officials in the matter of porters.

In consequence of this shortage the Mpika district, though situated to the northward of the Serenje district, has to supply practically the whole of the labour calls to the westward of the Luangwa valley. Anyone arriving at Broken Hill and requiring porters has to engage them from Mpika or Fort Jameson, according to the route he is about to take. Incidentally I may mention that it is as well for the intending traveller to make his arrangements well ahead, otherwise he may find himself stranded at the railhead with some weeks of weary waiting before him.

In addition to current demands Mpika has also, during the dry season, to find labour for the Government salt-mines north of Mpika, and equally a quota for the Transvaal mines, which every-

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla.

where absorb the pick of the labour market ; for the Broken Hill copper mines and for the railway.

When all these calls are considered, it is not surprising that travellers, arriving suddenly at Mpika towards the close of the labour year, should fare badly in the matter of labour. We should consequently advise those who intend visiting the district to do so earlier than the month of November.

### SPORT.

Sport in this part of the country proved indifferent, solely because we passed through it at the close of the dry season, the driest and hottest time of the year.

There are countries in which this period is the best for sport, as in them the effect of the heat and drought is to collect the game in well-defined limits. In North-East Rhodesia, however, these factors combine to produce exactly the opposite effect, and this is not surprising when we consider the nature of the country in conjunction with the usual habits of game.

North-East Rhodesia is practically one huge forest intersected by rivers and natural glades; dambos, to give them their local names. These dambos usually indicate the water-courses along which the rain finds its way into streams and rivers; they have during the greater part of the year a marshy channel with either waterholes or a small stream of running water passing through it. It is to these places that game comes to drink, feeding

## Impressions of North-East Rhodesia

both before and after on the rich grass by which the watercourses are bordered. In the evening small game, such as reedbuck, puku, oribi will begin to emerge from the forests between 4 and 5 P.M.; but the larger antelope, more especially bulls, do not come out to the open much before sunset. If disturbed they will return into the forest before sunrise, but otherwise they remain feeding till the increasing heat of the sun drives them to shelter.

As long as the dambos contain water, game continues to frequent them, but perforce migrate so soon as they are dry. This movement of the game from the dambos does not, however, result in a closer assembly, as it would do in a less well-watered country; it merely means further dispersion—to the forests for food and shelter from the scorching sun, and to the numberless rivers for water, where there is always a plentiful supply to be found, watering-places being innumerable. The forests are vast, and at the end of the dry season a light rain starts the young grass shooting up amongst the trees, producing feeding grounds everywhere. Game would have indeed to be plentiful to make any show under these conditions.

We took fifteen days to get from Mpika to Luambwa river; we saw eland once, roan twice, and hartebeest not at all.

To show the way sport varies with the season, Mr. Melland during late September and early October followed the road we travelled as far as the Lumbatwa river. His trip lasted nineteen days, of which five were spent in a boat on the lake itself;

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

during the remaining fourteen he saw eland on four occasions, roan antelope and hartebeest on seven.

After crossing the Wulangulu Hills, the rains being well on, we began not only to see game but also spoor in the dambos, showing the difference the change of season made. Unfortunately, the North-East Rhodesian licence did not permit of my shooting in North-West Rhodesia. The early part of the rainy season is the most favourable time for tracking, but how long before the growth of the grass renders shooting impossible we cannot say.

Local conditions vary somewhat year by year in all countries, and to meet with so-called abnormal ones is a matter of no surprise to an experienced traveller. The conditions in North-East Rhodesia in November 1908 were somewhat abnormal to our disadvantage; the three days' early rain we had experienced on the Bua river had been pretty general all over the country, and had doubtless brought the leaf on the trees and started the grass in the forests rather earlier than usual. On the other hand, the normal break of the regular rainy season was somewhat protracted, so that every day increased the scorching heat of the sun, and the dried up, parched looking appearance of the dambos; they were consequently absolutely devoid of game.

In the neighbourhood of the rivers we saw puku (*cobus vardonii*) in plenty; they abound in many places, and very pretty they looked with their bright chestnut coats glistening in the sunlight. Reedbuck were present in fair numbers, and might have been

## Impressions of North-East Rhodesia

numerous if the natives did not kill them. Zebra were to be seen at intervals, but be it noted zebra are protected. A large herd of sassaby near Malamas, where we had been told to expect them, were a new variety to us. Though waterbuck were not in great abundance, we saw them with fair frequency along the rivers, and procured a good specimen of the *Sing Sing Crawshayi* on the Luambwa, another new kind. Duiker we did not see, and though we saw oribi, they were by no means abundant.

We have reliable evidence for believing that eland, roan, and hartebeest are sufficiently numerous in the proper season to provide a traveller with sport for himself and meat for his caravan, but doubt whether either of these three varieties exist in large herds, or at any rate in numbers commensurate with the size of the forests in which they roam. Why they should prefer the young forest grass to that which grows on the banks of the rivers where they drink I cannot say; possibly the latter is too rank for their taste.

Eland we did not see at all whilst travelling. We crossed the fairly recent spoor of these animals two or three times, but always in mid-forest, at such a distance from water as to render pursuit impracticable. Anyone who has tried it knows that following a feeding herd of eland through forest is at all times a lengthy and troublesome operation. To have attempted it in our case would have necessitated a subdivision of the caravan and the carriage of sufficient water and food to meet the possibility of a night or so away from head-quarters. The

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

only successful occasion met with was due to the fact that we were able to pitch our camp almost immediately after seeing the spoor, and that I followed it so soon as the necessary arrangements had been made.

It is doubtful whether roan antelope are ever very numerous in this district. We saw more roan in a day on the Bua, and shot more in the Luangwa valley than on the whole way from Mpika to Broken Hill. Two young roan bulls running about near the sassaby at Malamas, and a fine looking bull which crossed the path, but unfortunately got our wind before a shot could be fired, were the only roan recorded in my diary.

Even though we had had previous experience of the wildness of that irritating brute, the forest hartebeest, a total absence of this, the commonest form of the antelope tribe, was most curious. With the exception of three standing on the far side of the Lumbatwa river early one morning, we did not see a single hartebeest between Fort Jameson and Mkushi; but here we saw a small herd placidly grazing near the river as late as 10 A.M. This was of course about ten days after the rains had broken.

We saw neither elephant nor buffalo, nor did we hear of them in our neighbourhood, nor see their spoor, although we had been told to expect both on the Lumbatwa. The natives at Malamas, where we crossed the river, knew nothing of them; therefore it would have necessitated a search to the westward, which, unfortunately, our time did not permit.







## Impressions of North-East Rhodesia

Lions were neither seen nor heard by us in North-East Rhodesia. This fact is not surprising, for there were no cattle and not sufficient game to attract them to the country we traversed. We subsequently heard, however, that lion frequented native tracks to the south-west of Fort Jameson.

A trip to Lake Bangwelo would probably have given us lechwe and situtunga, both of which we were most anxious to secure as new and curious specimens, but want of time did not allow of this divergence.

I do not think that the shortage in numbers of the larger varieties of antelope was due to the native population; they are hunters and meat eaters certainly, but I believe that they confine their depredations principally to the smaller sorts, such as reedbuck, oribi, and duiker, also the situtunga, which they spear from their canoes. It is possible that during the grass-burning season they do occasionally ring a herd of eland or hartebeest, but I fancy that if they do it gets pretty soon to the ears of the authorities.

Though we generally managed to camp near a village at the end of our day's march, these villages were few and far between, and situated, as a rule, at the river crossings. Moreover, it was generally in the vicinity of a village that we actually found large game, notably the sable antelope on October 11th in the neighbourhood of Chetande, the eland near Kopas, and the herd of sassaby at Malamas, which we gathered live there year in and year out. The game we failed to see had not been frightened

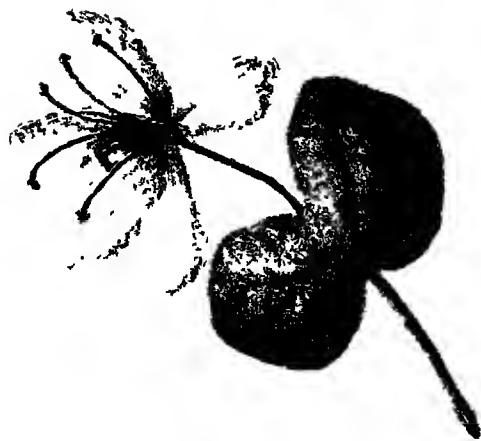
## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

away from the dambos by parties of travelling natives or by other caravans, as the tracks we passed along were by no means largely frequented. Antelope, if unmolested, will merely lift their heads and stare at the natives along a road as they pass by.

Eland appear to live by preference in the immediate vicinity of a village, and remain there so long as the village gardens offer them anything to feed on. In this respect they are not the least shy, and the natives know perfectly where to find them; it is only when the crops are harvested and the surface water dry that they leave these comfortable quarters and roam the forests in search of food. When they become a nuisance to the villagers, as is sometimes the case, the discontented chief sends in to the boma to complain, doubtless overstating numbers as well as the damage that has been done, and these reports may very possibly give rise to somewhat exaggerated estimates as to quantity.

It is difficult to tell from spoor alone how many beasts there are in a herd, but the herd we actually got up to contained not more than twenty-five animals. On the whole, it is doubtful whether the numbers in these herds can compare with the large herds that are met with in East Africa.

The natives in this part of the world were very reticent about giving information as to eland. I cannot help thinking that they rather like their presence, notwithstanding the damage they do them, possibly because their near neighbourhood



FLOWERING SHRUB (*Bauhinia*)  
Sweet scented. Victoria Falls.



FLOWERING SHRUB (not identified).  
N. E. Rhodesia.

Half natural size. Reproduced from Original Sketches by the Author.



## Impressions of North-East Rhodesia

means a nice fat young cow and an occasional calf on the sly. In one village we heard a circumstantial story as to how a certain chief had had three months "hard" for telling a party of "Buanas" from Broken Hill where eland lay. That he had his "three months" is very possible, and it had evidently produced a desirable effect on his neighbours. But if the records of the case were referred to, they would probably show that the sporting chief and his co-villagers had ringed and killed a nice little herd, male and female, and consumed them to the accompaniment of great rejoicings.

### AVERAGE LENGTH OF HORNS.

#### MPIKA DISTRICT OF NORTH-EAST RHODESIA.

		Best Known.		Good Average.
		Inches.		Inches.
Eland -	-	31½	-	30
Roan -	-	29½	-	28
Hartebeeste	-	22½	-	20½
Reedbuck	-	—	-	15
Puku -	-	19½	-	17½ to 18½
Sassaby ♂	-	17½	-	16½
Sassaby ♀	-	15½	-	15
Sititunga	-	32	-	22 to 28
Lechwe red	-	—	-	26 to 30
„ black	-	—	-	20 to 21
<hr/>				
		Inches.		Inches.
Warthog Tushes	-	15½	-	13
Rhino Horn	-	22	-	17
		261		18

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE PRODUCTS OF RHODESIA : SOUTHERN RHODESIA—NORTHERN RHODESIA

*(Compiled partly from Official Reports and Publications of  
the British South Africa Company.)*

IN June 1890, Cecil Rhodes sent five hundred pioneers northwards to Mashonaland. The column constructed a serviceable road four hundred miles in length from Tuli, on the Bechuanaland Border, to Fort Salisbury, now the town of Salisbury, and the capital of Southern Rhodesia. The whole of this undertaking, including the making of many drifts, was accomplished within three months. Not a shot was fired in anger, neither man, woman, or child molested. Later it was found, however, that, in order to keep Mashonaland, it would be necessary to crush the King of the Matabele, Lobengula, whom Sir Henry Stanley described as the most blood-thirsty tyrant he had ever come across. The Matabele war was the consequence.

On the spot where formerly Lobengula used to sit and watch prisoners and slaves being tortured stands Bulawayo. Mashonaland and Matabeleland form Southern Rhodesia. Its area covers 148,575 square miles, and there are now about three thousand miles of main roads, and, in addition, seven hundred and fifty miles of cross-roads in the mining districts.

## The Products of Rhodesia

The seat of the Government is at Salisbury. Here resides the Administrator, who presides over an Executive Council and a Legislative Council. The whole of Rhodesia is under the administrative control of the British South Africa Company, which was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1889.

The chief towns in Southern Rhodesia are Salisbury, the capital, Umtali, and Victoria, situated in Mashonaland, and Bulawayo and Gwelo in Matabeleland. These towns are well furnished with all necessities and many of the luxuries of civilization. They have their churches, schools, libraries, banks, clubs, hospitals, hotels, boarding-houses, public parks, and newspapers. Other townships are rapidly growing up.

All the principal places in Rhodesia are connected with the postal, telegraph, and telephone services, while the telegraph line has been carried as far north as Udjidji on Lake Tanganyika. There is a weekly mail to England. A reduction in the postal charge from Rhodesia has been made by the Company from 2½d. to 1d. the half ounce, and comes into force on 1st April this year (1911).

The Administration is paying great attention to the question of education, and throughout the territory the standard is high for a young colony. Fees are small, from £3 per annum for kindergarten to £6 per annum for pupils in the higher standards, while boarding terms range from about £50 a year.

On September 30th, 1910, European children attending twenty-four Government and aided schools



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

numbered 1,626, an increase of over 400 from the previous March, necessitating the opening of fresh schools.

Twenty scholarships of £40 per annum are to be obtained, while three Rhodes scholarships, valued at £300, are annually allotted to Southern Rhodesia.

A geological survey of Rhodesia has been begun, and the Department of Agriculture has been re-organized. The staff now consists—in addition to the Director—of two agriculturists, a botanist, a chemist, an entomologist and an agricultural engineer. There is also a veterinary branch.

It is proposed to create a Forestry Department in Southern Rhodesia. Much valuable timber exists which it is considered by experts should be periodically and systematically cut. A large timber area in Gwaai forest between Bulawayo and Wankie is now being worked.

Imports for the year ending October 1910 show an increase of £591,817 over the same time in 1909, while the receipts from Customs showed an increase of £43,508 over the corresponding period of the previous year.

It is noted in the latest Report of the Chartered Company that great signs of progress and prosperity are everywhere apparent in Rhodesia.

The railways there are also benefiting from the improved conditions, and increased receipts are shown in the general goods, passenger, and mineral traffic.



Roberti and the Roan Antelope.

[See p. 149.]



## The Products of Rhodesia

“There is a steady flow of immigration, and cultivated areas are expanding on every hand, homesteads are springing up, new implements are in use everywhere. There is a demand for farm labour quite beyond the supply. Cattle, both oxen and breeding stock, meet a ready sale.” Amongst white farmers, fencing, irrigation, and dairying are beginning to make general headway. Stock has increased to such an extent as to render paddocking and the production of food for stock as well as for man an important consideration. There are still plenty of openings for farmers and stock-breeders.

**Farm Prospects.**—A settler should have a capital, at the time he is ready to start farming in Rhodesia, of not less than £500. A knowledge of carpentering and some idea of how to erect rough brick buildings is recommended. Bricks are usually made on the farm, and are either burnt or sun-dried. He should be able to take to pieces and put together again agricultural implements, such as ploughs or mowing machines. A knowledge of veterinary work and the management of stock would prove invaluable. If he has no such knowledge he should acquire it before going out, or should spend a few months with a local farmer. The Chartered Company have a few “Home” farms, where a limited number of approved settlers may reside to acquire experience of the country before taking up land on their own account.

**Price of Land.**—Land may be bought or leased on easy terms, a small quit rent being payable. The purchase price varies according to

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

the locality and nature of the land, and facilities for inspecting land for sale are given by the Company. To quote the Company's handbook :—" Suppose a three thousand acre farm is bought at 2s.<sup>1</sup> per acre, and not paid for outright, the price of the farm will be £300, and the annual rent £15, until an instalment of not less than £30 has been paid, when the rent will be correspondingly reduced until the whole purchase price has been paid."

A system has recently been inaugurated whereby the most suitable areas for settlement have previously been reported upon by the Company's inspectors, thus avoiding disappointment to settlers.

**Ranching.**—The whole of Southern Rhodesia is suitable for ranching. There is a good demand by experienced stock farmers for large areas of land for this purpose. The Company grant pastoral leases in the more remote districts on certain conditions, the term not to exceed twenty-one years, and the area not to extend beyond thirty thousand acres, at a rent of £1 per one thousand acres per annum, the Company holding the right to re-value the land at the end of seven to fourteen years. The tenant may purchase at a valuation, at any time, not more than six thousand acres of his holding, so long as it is in one's block, and subject to the Company's approval.

Liebig's Limited, which includes the Lemco and Oxo Companies, have recently acquired a large tract

<sup>1</sup> The average price of undeveloped land sold by the Company at present is about 2s. 6d. an acre, but all land terms are subject to alteration at any time.

## The Products of Rhodesia

of land, approximately eight hundred thousand acres, for ranching in the Tuli district.

There is a great opening for dairy farming. £35,000 was paid for imported butter, cheese, and milk during 1909, all of which could in time be supplied locally. Dairies where farmers can send their milk and cream have been started in the Umtali district and near Salisbury. A Co-operative Society for farmers has also been opened at the latter place.

**Cattle.**—Native heifers and cows can be purchased from about £5 to £8 apiece, and young steers, suitable for farm work, at about £4 from natives, although a trained animal may command £10. The Agricultural Department, with a view to improve the stock, periodically import bulls and heifers, and these are sold on easy terms to farmers.

It is pointed out in the Report that cattle are very free in Rhodesia from the diseases they are subject to in northern lands. "The general condition of the stock leaves little to be desired, and the rate of increase is nothing less than phenomenal." To overcome horse sickness, which still prevails, it is hoped that in time a preventive inoculation may be discovered. This has already been successfully done with mules.

**Sheep.**—Native type of sheep can be bought for 8s. to 15s. each. Pigs do well; and if properly fed, command a ready market.

In 1908 natives owned two hundred and thirty-two thousand five hundred head of cattle, two

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

hundred and sixteen thousand head of sheep, and five hundred and ninety-four thousand head of goats.

**Ostriches.**—Ostrich-farming has been begun in a small way, and might be made a profitable undertaking. On payment of £1 under a special permit wild birds may be captured.

**Crops.**—The staple product is maize. It is easily cultivated and gives a larger yield than any other cereal. It should not cost more to produce than 4s. a bag of two hundred pounds, and the selling price, which varies, should be from 8s. to 12s. 6d. per bag. Four to six bags per acre is about the average yield, though crops of eight are not uncommon. Ten thousand bags of maize were exported last year as an experiment, and were favourably reported upon at the London Corn Exchange. It was pointed out that if a uniform standard could be supplied, there would be a steady demand for Rhodesian white flat maize. It is, however, uncertain whether local needs in the future may not be too great to allow of export.

In addition to pumpkins, beans, castor oil, hemp and ground nuts; potatoes, onions, millet, oat-hay, wheat, and sweet potatoes are grown; and, occasionally with some success, rape, buckwheat, loofa, and calabash pipes. These crops can be cultivated on ordinary mealie land. Linseed yields well, but is principally valued as calf-meal. The European cereals, wheat, barley, oats, and rye, give every prospect of being remunerative under irrigation.

**Coffee.**—Coffee is another crop promising well,



Crossing River in Machulla.

[See p 152]





## The Products of Rhodesia

notably in the Melsetter district, where more than twenty farmers are growing it for sale, and the crop is likely to be further extended. It is stated that this district is also suitable for the cultivation of rubber.

**Fruit.**—The following fruits are grown in different parts of Rhodesia:—Apples, plums, peaches, pears, grapes, guavas, paw-paws, figs, loquats, bananas, pineapples, Cape gooseberries, oranges, and lemons. Oranges grown in Rhodesia have been reported to be as good as the finest Californian fruit.

In order to encourage the cultivation of Citrus fruit, the Company have planted a nursery of twenty thousand young orange trees of an indigenous variety, from which it is proposed to supply the public with plants.

**Markets.**—The proximity of the mining districts gives good markets. A ready market is also found in South Africa, while fruit properly packed will command a good price in the home market.

The best time to take up land is in the dry season, from May to September. During the time land is being broken up temporary huts must be erected. These can be made locally by natives or purchased ready for erecting at Salisbury; prices according to size. Large huts, sixteen feet diameter, eight feet to eaves, a wooden door, and two windows, cost £25; smaller huts, twelve feet diameter and one window, £13. They can easily be moved from one site to another, a great advantage in a temporary dwelling. No time should, however, be lost in

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

erecting a permanent building of brick, with wooden floor and good foundations of local stone, so as to have all in readiness for the rainy season. The cost of making bricks has been estimated at from 15s. to 20s. per thousand. Building material, such as boards, window frames, etc., can be procured at Salisbury.

**Wages.**—As a rule farmers can obtain labourers at the average wage of 10s. or 12s. per month in Mashonaland. In Matabeleland the rates are rather higher. In addition to wages, a native receives a food allowance of two and a half to three pounds of meal a day; but if sweet potatoes or pumpkins are supplied, this allowance is reduced. Native drivers from South Africa get about £3 per month wages, with rations, but local natives are often trained for ordinary farm driving.

**Servants.**—Native men are easily taught to do domestic work of all kinds, and they make good cooks; they receive 15s. to £2 a month wages. Good European domestic servants and nurses are sometimes in demand, but it is not advisable for them to go out without assurance of employment beforehand. Wages vary from £3 to £5 a month, with board and lodging.

### MINES.

The whole of Southern Rhodesia is extensively mineralized. The area is about 150,000 square miles, most of which is at an altitude of between four thousand to five thousand feet.

## The Products of Rhodesia

Rhodesia should before another ten years have passed stand third in the world's producing countries; to-day it is about seventh. Anyone visiting Mashonaland and Matabeleland at the present time cannot fail to see how the gold mining industry is expanding.

Up to 1898 upwards of one hundred and fifty-six thousand claims had been located and many mining companies have been formed. But out of this number in December 1909 only two hundred and eight separate properties were shown as actually producing gold. For the last thirteen years the total output of gold for Southern Rhodesia was 4,442,134 ounces, which was valued at £17,023,432 (of this £2,623,709 was for 1909). During the same period silver weighed 1,208,868 ounces, copper 359 tons, lead 5341 tons, coal 937,690 tons, chrome iron 94,644 tons, asbestos 659 tons, diamonds seven thousand and twenty carats, and other minerals—wolframite, scheelite, and antimony—in smaller amounts.<sup>1</sup>

**Coal.**—Coalfields are extensive, but at present coal is not much in demand. The seams are thick and of good quality, and appear to extend at intervals all through north of Matabeleland and south towards the Sabi river. The Wankie district,

<sup>1</sup> The return for the year ending 31st December 1910 shows the output of gold to be worth £2,568,198, silver two hundred and seventeen thousand six hundred and thirty-three ounces, lead seven hundred and forty-five tons, coal one hundred and eighty thousand and sixty-eight tons, chrome iron forty-four thousand and two tons.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

which covers about 400 square miles, is the only place at present being worked. The price of this coal is prohibitive, except for certain mines in the immediate neighbourhood of the railway; but with an improved water supply, which has recently been arranged for, a reduction may before long be possible.<sup>1</sup>

**Chrome Iron.**—The export of chrome iron ore from the Selukwe district shows a satisfactory increase—forty-four thousand and two tons, valued in Europe at £98,217 in 1910, as compared with twenty-five thousand six hundred and twenty tons of the previous year.

**Precious Stones.**—Up to the end of 1907 the Somabula area was the only district where precious stones were known to exist in any quantity. About that date it was found that between the Bembezi and Inkwekwesi rivers “there existed one or more pipes of the true Kimberley type of rock, and upon trial these were found to carry diamonds in notable quantity.” So far this district has not been much developed, but prospects are encouraging. The diamonds are “white in colour and quite different in their crystalline form” from those of Somabula, which, according to the report, are somewhat green in their raw state; this, however, disappears in cutting. No one is allowed to prospect for precious stones without a permit issued by the British South Africa Company under a penalty of £100. A digger must register any claims he has made and

<sup>1</sup> A reduction of 2s. a ton was announced on 1st January 1911.

## The Products of Rhodesia

pay 5s. for his certificate, and in addition a rent of 2s. 6d. a month for each claim he acquires. He must also report the finding of precious stones once a month to the local Mining Commissioner.

It is difficult to realize the extent of the mining industry. There are seventy-five mines in the immediate neighbourhood of Bulawayo; there are forty-five mining properties in the Gwelo district; and the Globe and Phoenix Company, who own the premier mine here, had a record year in 1909, and for the last three years have been going ahead. In the Hartley division fifty-one mines are situated. In the Salisbury district there are twenty-one mining properties, and in the Lomagundi district there are nine. At Mazoe, to the north of Salisbury, eighteen, including the Jumbo Mine, exist. The principal ironstone beds are the Giant Mine in Mashonaland; the Falcon, situated fifty-nine miles from Gwelo, in the same province; the Wanderer in Matabeleland; besides several smaller mines.

Twenty-five mines near Bulawayo showed gold output in March 1910 value from a few hundreds to £8,421.

Besides the large mining companies there are quite a number of small workers working for themselves on a system of tribute. On the total output of gold for Rhodesia these men contribute over forty per cent. In many cases they are working on old claims that have either been abandoned or are leased to them by companies that failed to make them pay. Occasionally two or three men form a small syndicate and own the mine. The system

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

has grown up of recent years and appears to be successful, as there is very little outlay. The Chartered Company give these tributors every encouragement. Owners charge them a royalty of five to twenty per cent. on the output.

A prospector's licence costs £1, and a prospector should make himself acquainted with the mining laws in force, and it might be well for him to provide himself with the *Miners and Settlers' Guide*, published in Johannesburg, from which most of the information in regard to mines has been taken.

A genuine prospector who is prepared to work hard has every chance in Rhodesia. Up till now most mining operations have been carried on where ancient workings are known to be, and the virgin reefs have hardly been tested. It is, however, considered unlikely that the ancients discovered even as much as half the gold-bearing reefs that exist, so that there is a good chance for anyone systematically prospecting some of the unexplored districts.

On the other hand, the *Mining Guide* says :—  
“ If the proposition, that because there is a payable gold in one particular block of claims there must be gold in the adjacent ground is true in other parts of the world, it is certainly not true of Southern Rhodesia, and any phenomenal activity engineered on such a basis cannot fail to re-act seriously on the country.”

Thirty thousand natives are employed in mines in Rhodesia. They are well cared for; regulations

## The Products of Rhodesia

in regard to their welfare are enforced on all employers. White labour in the mines is not much in demand, and any vacancies that may occur are quickly filled up by men on the spot, acquainted with local conditions, the handling of native labourers and their language, etc.

**Climate.**—The climate of Southern Rhodesia is not extreme. The maximum heat at Bulawayo is 78° F., and at Salisbury 76°; the minimum 54° at Bulawayo and 53° at Salisbury. The rainfall in Mashonaland averages thirty-two inches, in Matabeleland twenty-three inches. The wet season commences at the end of October with the early rains and lasts intermittently till the beginning of April. No rain need be expected from May to September. The greatest heat is generally experienced immediately before the rains break.

It is advisable for the settler to provide himself with a small medicine chest and a mosquito curtain. The same rules of health that apply to Nyasaland and other tropical countries should be observed in Rhodesia.

**Defence.**—There is a standing force in Southern Rhodesia of British South Africa Police. Men are recruited in London at the offices of the Company, 2 London Wall Buildings. Only well-educated men are accepted.

### NORTHERN RHODESIA.

Northern Rhodesia comprises two separate provinces, North-East and North-West Rhodesia.



## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Each has its own Administrator and seat of Government. The capital of the first is at Fort Jameson, and that of the second at Livingstone. An order in Council will, however, shortly be promulgated, amalgamating the two provinces under the title of "Northern Rhodesia," with headquarters at Livingstone.<sup>1</sup>

The population of Northern Rhodesia consists of about one thousand whites and nine hundred and six thousand natives, made up from more than twelve different tribes.

**Railway.**—The railway has been extended from Broken Hill to the Congo border, one hundred and thirty-two miles north of Broken Hill, and the Belgian authorities are carrying it on through their territory to the Star of the Congo mine, about one hundred and sixty-seven miles. It is also probable that a further extension to Kambove, another two hundred miles, will be completed before long.

It will have been seen in these pages that these two provinces are still in their infancy. Things, however, move so fast nowadays that in a comparative short time the country will be opened up by traders and farmers. The Chartered Company encourages commercial enterprise and bona fide trading.

### NORTH-WESTERN RHODESIA.

North-Western Rhodesia has an area of 182,000 square miles. There are nine districts and seventeen postal stations.

<sup>1</sup> See footnote, p. 172.



Native Visitors : Rhodesia.

[See p. 176.



## The Products of Rhodesia

The principal districts taken up in this province for agricultural purposes are those adjacent to the Kafue river. On the Batoka Plateau, near Kalomo, there are several cattle farms and ranches. The number of stock owned by Europeans has increased since the last report by over two thousand, while the value of the stock exported from Northern Rhodesia during the two years 1908 and 1909 came to more than £100,000.

**Cotton.**—Cotton from North Rhodesia has been favourably reported upon; prices ranging from 8½d. to 1s. 1½d. per lb. have been obtained at the Liverpool Exchange. A ginnery is being established in the Kafue district, and an experimental farm has been started in the neighbourhood to test different varieties of cotton. Over one thousand acres have recently been planted by white farmers.

Anyone desiring a farm in North-Western Rhodesia must apply to the Administrator for "permission to locate a farm," giving particulars as to his capabilities, capital, etc. The answers proving satisfactory, permission will be granted to select a site. When this has been decided upon, a survey of the proposed farm, with information in regard to native villages, etc., must be forwarded to the Mines and Lands office. If after an inspection by a Government official it is found that no native rights are infringed, a "Permit of occupation" will be granted on payment of the price per acre, rent for the current year, and registration fees.

**Land.**—The price of land varies according to situation. At a distance of over ten miles from the

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

railway it costs not less than 2d. an acre for permit of occupation and 6d. per acre purchase price. A farm of three thousand acres at this rate would cost all told £32 14s., with an annual quit rent of £5.<sup>1</sup> The terms of the permit state a European must reside on the land and cultivate not less than 5% of his holding. Land may not be occupied without a "permit of occupation."

**Mines.**—The Northern Copper Company were granted originally two concessions by the British South Africa Company, one of ten square miles at Chanobi and another of five hundred and fifty square miles north of the Kafue river.

The big concession comprises fifteen different mines, of which the Silver King appears to be the most important. Nearly all of these seem to be of copper, with traces of silver. There are extensive ironstone beds and gold-bearing quartz distributed over many miles of country. Coal is also to be found. Everywhere are traces of ancient workings. To what extent any of these mines are being worked at the present time it has not been possible to ascertain.

There are some very interesting hot springs in this region, discovered in 1902 by Mr. Davey, C.E. of the Northern Copper Company. He divides them into three series. The springs situated four miles south of the Kafue river were found sufficiently hot to cook some eggs. The second series were discovered near the junction of the Lunga and

<sup>1</sup> The minimum price has recently been fixed at 1s. per acre.

## The Products of Rhodesia

Kafue rivers, at an altitude of three thousand feet. Here eggs immersed in a tin were boiled in three and a half minutes. The water was brackish, and contained lime and chlorine as well as iron in solution. In the third series, situated within the boundaries of the big concession, the water was found to be very hot and full of sulphuretted hydrogen, which gave out an unpleasant odour; it also contained lime and chlorine. This water proved very valuable for rheumatism and skin diseases; workmen, after a few days' bathing in it and drinking of the water, returned to camp wholly cured. An interesting discovery was made by Mr. Davey, who found two complete human skeletons in two of the largest springs. A native must at some time have got into the spring to take a bath; and being overcome by the fumes or from some other reason, have succumbed.

### NORTH-EASTERN RHODESIA.

North-Eastern Rhodesia comprises one hundred and nine thousand square miles. The principal settlements are Fort Jameson (which is the capital), Fife, and Abercorn. These latter are to the north of the province, on the Stevenson Road. There are seven fiscal and magisterial centres.

**Mines.**—About a hundred miles from Fort Jameson, in North-Eastern Rhodesia, is a small gold mine known as the Sassare, which in July 1907 was employing two hundred labourers. It is now worked on tribute.

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The salt mines near Mpika bring in a small revenue to the Government, as salt is in much request by natives.

A good deal of prospecting has been recently done in the neighbourhood of the Wulangulu Hills and Irumi Mountains, but the result is not yet known.

**Farms.**—Those anxious to acquire land in North-Eastern Rhodesia must first apply to the Secretary to the Administrator at Fort Jameson; and the purchase price, which will depend on the situation, must be arranged with the Administration. Farms not exceeding nine thousand acres are granted on a small annual quit rent, and cattle can be supplied to settlers on reasonable terms. Facilities for the payment of survey fees—which are charged in this province—are allowed to settlers introducing stock or farming implements.

The high plateau to the north and that part of the country known as M'peseni's is considered healthy. It is open, well watered, and suitable for cattle. Wheat, fibre, and European fruits can be grown in these districts, while the planting of cotton and coffee has been tried with satisfactory results.

**Rubber.**—Since 1903 the indigenous rubber of Northern Rhodesia has been strictly protected, thus giving a chance to young vines; consequently these show a great increase. In North-Eastern Rhodesia the landolphia is a natural product, and is very vigorous, spreading rapidly when protected. Only a small portion of this district has so far been



Caravan crossing Lukulu River in Dug-outs.

[See p. 188.]





## The Products of Rhodesia

inspected by experts. Samples of this wild rubber have been favourably reported upon in London.

**Defence.**—The defence of North-East Rhodesia, hitherto provided by the Government of Nyasaland, terminates on the 31st March 1911, and in future the defence and policing of this province will be undertaken by the British South Africa Company.

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE AWAKENING OF THE CENTRAL AFRICAN.

*"I go back to Africa to try and make an open path for Christianity and commerce. Do you carry out the work which I have begun. I leave it with you."*

These were Dr. Livingstone's impressive words to a representative assembly from Oxford and Cambridge on December 4th, 1857, which inspired his interested hearers to form the Universities Mission.

At this time the Shire Highlands were quite unknown to Europeans. There were rumours of a great lake named Marawi, to be called subsequently Nyasa, which is a Yao word meaning water; but the Portuguese, who had been three centuries in Africa, had never ventured so far inland.

Livingstone, who had been much struck with the beauty of this region, recommended the Universities Mission to settle in these Highlands of Nyasa. Accordingly Magomera was chosen as headquarters.

The pioneer bishop was Charles Frederick Mackenzie, consecrated in 1861. After only ten months' work amid great hardships he died from fever contracted through the upsetting of a dug-out on the Shire, in which he lost all his stores, medicine,

## The Awakening of the Central African

etc. Most of his devoted comrades followed him to the grave. The next was Bishop Tozer; he, too, had to fight against drought, famine, and deadly fever. Under these adverse circumstances, thought it wiser to remove his headquarters to Zanzibar.

His action was much criticised at the time, probably by those who did not know the country. It was, however, only carrying out the French maxim: "*reculer pour mieux sauter*," and was justified by events.

At this time the slave trade—called by Livingstone "the open sore of the world"—was rampant, and the slave market in Zanzibar sold its slaves by thousands yearly. Children rescued by British cruisers from slave dhows were handed over to the Mission. Boys were carefully trained to form the nucleus of a native ministry. One of them, named John Swedi, was ordained deacon in 1879, and is still working for the Mission. A lady undertook to instruct the girls to tend the sick and the little ones, wash clothes, and make themselves useful.

In 1873, the Sultan of Zanzibar, through the efforts of Dr., now Sir John Kirk, the British Political Agent, relinquished the transport of slaves by sea, and closed all the slave markets in his dominions.

On the site of the slave market, where formerly had been perpetrated every known horror and misery that human flesh can endure, now stands a handsome cathedral, opened in 1879 by Bishop Steere, who only survived his great work three years. He is buried behind the altar.

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

Several attempts had been made to extend the Mission to the mainland. These had resulted in repeated failures, but in 1875 a permanent Mission was established at a place now called Msalabani, meaning "at the Cross." It was attacked by a warlike tribe who were driven off. The local chief and his warriors in great spirits executed a war dance outside the church; the missionary went out and invited them in; they entered, their spears still gleaming with the blood of their enemies. Thus was a beginning made.

The good bishop and his missionaries had not lost sight of their original goal, Lake Nyasa; it had only been abandoned temporarily. Bishop Steere made a lonely journey in 1875, and got within seventy miles of the lake, but it nearly cost him his life. The Rev. W. P. Johnson was the next to follow, and after two years of great hardships and incessant work, visiting different wild tribes and carrying his life in his hand, he eventually reached Magomera, the birthplace of the Universities Mission in the country where Mackenzie had died.

He initiated the idea of a small steamer, subsequently named the *Charles Jansen*, after a companion missionary who had only lived to reach the lake, and in order to collect funds for this purchase, returned home. Every one of the three hundred and eighty cases containing the sections of the boat had to be carried from the coast by native porters to the banks of the Shire. It was launched 5th September, 1885, and the following year was in full work, visiting towns on the lake coast, fetching mails and stores once a

## The Awakening of the Central African

month from the Scotch station Bandawe. Now another and larger steamer, the *Chauncy Maples*, plies up and down the lake, calling every few weeks at more than fifty villages scattered round the shore. It is so constructed that it can be fitted up as a chapel, has a printing press on board, and accommodation for eight Europeans, as well as a large space for the use of native students and the crew. Archdeacon Johnson, as he now is, still works unceasingly among his people.

The influence of the Universities Mission now extends from Zanzibar—only 6° below the Equator—through German territory, Nyasaland, Angoni-land, and as far south as Livingstone in North-West Rhodesia. There are sub-stations at Kota-Kota, Mpondas, near Fort Johnson, and over one hundred and fifty minor stations in Nyasaland; while in the Zanzibar diocese are one hundred and sixty sub-stations.

We must confine our remarks to the work carried on in Nyasaland. The headquarters of the diocese are at Likoma on Lake Nyasa. This island, which has a good natural harbour, is about five miles long and two and a half broad, and is in British territory. Four thousand natives live in scattered villages along the shore. The mainland opposite belongs to Portugal.

The Mission staff consists of one hundred and twenty-six Europeans and four hundred and fifty Africans. Of the Europeans, none are paid a higher salary than £20 a year, and many give their services free. The schools number two hundred

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

and sixty-eight, scholars eleven thousand eight hundred and twenty-two in all; one thousand four hundred and sixty-six of these are in different schools on the island. The attendance in the girls' school rises sometimes to two hundred. A kindergarten system for infant children has also been instituted.

On the site of the old witch-burning ground at Likoma stands a fine cathedral of brick and granite. It is cruciform in shape, from east to west two hundred and eighty feet long, and across the transept eighty-five feet wide, and when complete, with its chapter-house, cloisters, and library, will cover thirty-seven thousand square feet of ground. The whole of the work was carried out by native Christians and learners.

The medical work in connection with the Mission is steadily increasing. In 1899 Dr. Howard arrived at Likoma, and the first nurse was stationed at Kota Kota. Since then several more have been added to the staff; for there is a nurse at each of the European stations.

Here also is a large native hospital for men and one for women, also a European hospital. In the dispensary a nurse, with native assistants, spends several hours each morning attending to out-patients. These native assistants have been taught by a doctor to bandage and dress wounds. During the epidemic of small-pox a great deal of vaccination was undertaken. Now most natives in touch with the Mission have been vaccinated.

Many traders and members of the Administra-

## The Awakening of the Central African

tion have been nursed by the Mission, for each station has its European sick-room. Native patients are brought by the steamers from the various lake-shore villages. In 1908 six hundred in-patients were treated in hospital, while out-patients numbered thirty-seven thousand two hundred and sixty-eight. Through their medical work the U.M.C.A. have opportunities of reaching natives which otherwise would be unattainable.

Besides religious instruction and ordinary schooling, the teaching of a great deal of industrial work is undertaken—printing, carpentering, engineering, building, and other trades.

The printing office is an important branch of the Mission. Books are printed in Chinyanje, Yao, and English. The carpenter's shop turned out the whole of the woodwork of the cathedral and the necessary furniture for the European houses. Other natives are trained as stone-masons, carvers, and some as sailors, for numerous boats are required to ply between the island and mainland fetching food, fuel, and building material. Many of the pupils on leaving the Mission get employment under the Government, and as far as possible an eye is kept on their after careers.

At the south end of the island is the Theological College of St. Andrew, where natives are trained for the African Church.

St. Michael's is a college on the mainland for training teachers; it was started in 1900, and there are some sixty students. Boys with an aptitude are specially selected after passing an entrance ex-



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amination. As teachers they get very small wages, less than they can earn in other professions, yet the college is always full. After five years of teaching, if a man desires it and has a good record, he may go to the Theological College and read for an examination, and so on to the upward path of deacon and priest.

The Rev. Yohani Abdullah has been for years in sole charge of Unanga—a station sixty miles from the Lake, in the Yao country—which has its stone church and flourishing schools for boys and girls. He is held in much respect by his fellow-natives.

At Malindi—a stronghold of Mohammedanism—is a large engineering shop for steamer repairs, also European and native hospitals, dispensary, church, and schools. With a larger staff and more funds a chain of stations could be made to the coast.

It is proposed to commemorate the Mission Jubilee by the formation of a third diocese in North-East Rhodesia, the scene of Livingstone's last labours. The Mission is anxious to establish itself before the coming of the railway, which will bring in its wake all sorts—good, bad, and indifferent.

. . . . .

The Church of Scotland Mission was inaugurated in 1875 as a memorial to Livingstone. His death two years before had stimulated the desire to lift out of darkness the benighted beings whom he had loved, and for whom he had sacrificed his life.



Native Children.

[See p. 201.]



## The Awakening of the Central African

The various Presbyterian churches in Scotland united to form a mission.

The Established Church agreed to help, but preferred to have a distinct mission of its own, and settled at Blantyre—named by Livingstone from his birthplace on the Clyde. Its present sphere of influence extends from Port Herald across the Shire Highlands fully two hundred and forty miles due north to the furthestmost shore of Lake Chiuta. The total area over which the Mission works is roughly one thousand five hundred square miles. Other principal stations besides Blantyre are Domasi, founded in 1884; Mlanje, in 1888; and that of Zomba, in 1903; each of which has its own ordained minister, teachers, etc. There are numerous other smaller districts and out-stations.

In 1909 there were three thousand four hundred and ten baptized Christians, of which two-thirds were communicants. Schools number one hundred and eighteen, with four thousand six hundred and sixty scholars. The average attendance at the Sabbath services is twelve thousand seven hundred and sixty-one.

The work carried on is evangelical, educational, medical, and industrial. Thirty-five years have passed since the Mission was first inaugurated. No doubt the excellent, practical education has great influence upon native character. It will have appeared in these pages that we thought well of our servants, most of whom had been brought up at Blantyre in the Mission schools.

The head of the Mission is the Hon. and Rev.

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Alexander Hetherwick, M.A., a member of the Legislative Council. The staff at Blantyre consists of two other ordained ministers, two medical missionaries, three nurses, two teachers, besides a carpenter, gardener, printer, and eight ladies. The native staff consists of eight evangelists, five teachers, one hundred head teachers in out-stations, nine hospital assistants and seven apprentices, six printers and nine apprentices, two storekeepers and six apprentices, one blacksmith, three gardeners with twelve apprentices, two in school board department, one needlewoman with eight apprentices, five in laundry with six learners.

Every European on the staff has his own small "parish," to which he devotes his spare time, and every parish is endeavouring to have its own church. Natives contribute largely towards the upkeep of their churches, even sending postal orders when employed away from home.

The medical department under Drs. Caverhill and Macfarlane, with their staff of three nurses, carry out not only medical but also evangelical and educational work. Three hundred and ninety-seven patients were received during the year in the hospital, while among the eight dispensaries scattered over the mission field five thousand seven hundred and ninety cases were treated. Dr. Caverhill's remarks on the sleeping sickness scourge are interesting. He says:—"The most important addition to the category of diseases treated is that of sleeping sickness. This disease will never be epidemic in the area in which we work, as the

## The Awakening of the Central African

means of ordinary transmission are wanting, but the hospital here can play an important part in detecting and isolating infected natives and preventing them from infecting other districts."

The people are now willing to pay small sums for medical attention, which helps to make this branch self-supporting. Native boys are learning to wait upon the sick, and are beginning to recognize the dignity of the task. Seven lads have voluntarily apprenticed themselves for three years, and classes are being organized to ensure their proper training. It is hoped in the future that these apprentices, when duly qualified, will be able to take charge of outlying dispensaries. A dispensary has been recently opened about eighty miles from Blantyre, which is under the charge of a native dispenser trained in the hospital, who is reported to be doing well.

The carpentering department was very successful during 1909, also the garden and agricultural departments. The printing department pays its expenses, and has something over for other needs of the Mission.

There is also a sewing class, the girls numbering fifty-seven, some of whom also attend school. The women's education is not so advanced as that of the men, but they are being influenced in the right direction, and being gradually taught to fulfil their duties as Christian women.

Blantyre Church took three years to build, and was opened in 1891. The Rev. Clement Scott was the architect, and it was erected under his super-

## A Thousand Miles in a Machilla

vision. The whole of the work, including the making of bricks and the woodwork, was done by native labour, the only things sent from Scotland being the glass windows and some internal furnishings. The church is so crowded on Sundays it is necessary to divide the native congregation into two, those resident in Blantyre at one service and those from outside districts at another.

At Mlanje there are now two churches, one presided over by the ordained minister and the other by the lay missionary. Native elders have been appointed, ten of whom are on the permanent staff, and one is the son of a local chief.

There are two churches in the Domasi district, one of which was entirely erected by native Christians. At Zomba the minister, Mr. Anderson, has, in addition to his native parishioners, a European congregation, most of whom are in Government employ.

Lake Chiuta is in the borders of Portuguese territory and about one hundred miles from Domasi. Schools have lately been started, and three men—two of whom are the sons of village headmen—have been baptized. The Mission makes it a rule to baptize no one unless he or she can read the Bible in the native tongue. As there are plenty of schools, there is no excuse for remaining in ignorance.

The principal event of 1909 at Blantyre was the laying of the memorial stone of the "Henry Henderson" Institute, designed by the Nyasaland Mission for the higher training of teachers, evan-



Servants at Broken Hill Station, saying "Good-bye."

[See p 242





## The Awakening of the Central African

gelists, and ministers for the native church. The ceremony was performed by Mrs. A. L. Bruce, Dr. Livingstone's daughter, "who was welcomed," Dr. Hetherwick reports, "by the descendants of his own '*faithful Makololo*,' whom he left behind him to hold the country for the English, who, he said, '*would come back*'; by the sons of the Yao headmen who fought him as the enemy of their slave trade; and not least, by two old men whom her father had released from slavery not very far from where Blantyre now stands."

. . . . .

When Livingstone discovered Lake Nyasa in 1859 he at once realized what a splendid base it would make for missionary enterprise. He recommended the Free Church of Scotland to undertake a mission to this region; but it was not until after his death that the pioneer party actually started. Eight carefully chosen men were put under the command of Mr. E. D. Young, a lieutenant of the Royal Navy, who had had some experience of African travel, and had been on the Zambesi in 1862 when Livingstone was there.

They set out on the 21st May 1875, and took with them a small steamer named the *Ilala*, especially built for the lake, also two boats for use on the river. After a perilous voyage they landed at the Kongoni mouth of the Zambesi. Here the *Ilala* was put together and was launched on the 2nd August. Not having been built for a shallow river, the steamer stuck on sandbanks. At this

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time, not only did the river abound with hippopotamus and crocodiles, but on the banks roamed lions, leopards, and other wild beasts. In addition to this, the great heat, mosquitoes, and the malarious atmosphere made the voyage almost unbearable. They continued, however, until they reached a point three hundred miles from the coast. Here the steamer had to be taken to pieces and carried sixty miles to the head of the cataract; but thanks to Livingstone's good name, the natives proved friendly, and the Arab slavers did not dare molest them. At Matopo the steamer was reconstructed and the final voyage up the Shire recommenced. After steaming between ninety and a hundred miles they reached the lake, 12th October 1875.

As has been already mentioned, the slave trade was at this time rampant. The Arab slave raiders, to obtain two thousand three hundred slaves, had slaughtered two thousand five hundred natives, while one thousand three hundred human beings had perished on the way. It was estimated that twenty thousand slaves passed Lake Nyasa annually on their route to the coast.

Cape Maclear, about thirty miles from the south end of Lake Nyasa, was the place chosen for the first settlement. The local chief, Mpondo, proved friendly to the missionaries, and that station became a refuge for the starving, wretched creatures who had escaped the clutches of the slave dealers.

Cape Maclear, however, turned out unhealthy, and so many Europeans died there that the settlement was moved, after two years, to Bandawe.

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This was situated about one hundred and eighty miles from the south end of the lake on its west side, and was found healthier and more central.

It is impossible in these pages to trace the history of the Mission through its varied labours, except to say that the United Free Church Mission were the pioneers of missionary work in North-East Rhodesia, and also deserve the credit of subduing the wild Angoni, or 'Ngoni tribe.

When the headquarters were moved to Bandawe Dr. Laws visited Angoniland and established friendly relations with Mobera, the chief, and his war-like people. The Angoni, also known as Mzitu, are an offshoot of the great Zulu nation; their ancestors revolted from Tshake early in the nineteenth century.

At this time their superstitions were appalling, witchcraft cast a dreadful spell over their lives; they had no hope of a better life to lighten their darkness or relieve their sufferings. A start was made by sending amongst them a Kaffir evangelist, named William Koyi, who was able to speak their language. He was followed shortly after—in 1882—by Dr. Laws and Dr. Hannington. Twenty years of earnest work has altered this people beyond recognition, even by their own missionaries, for to-day three hundred native teachers preach every Sunday, three thousand learners are attending baptism classes, schools muster fifty-five and are well attended; slave trading is no more, the Angoni warrior raids are at an end; the old and infirm are no longer given to wild

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beasts to devour; the wild and drunken dances have ceased. The above applies to this one tribe alone.

The Mission extends its influence along the west side of Lake Nyasa to the north end, reaches Lake Tanganyika, takes in a large portion of both North-East and North-West Rhodesia, and touches Lake Bangwelo. The work is evangelical, educational, industrial, and medical. There are ten large stations and four hundred and ninety-three out-stations; there are eleven ordained ministers and nine medical missionaries on the staff, besides lay helpers. Natives contributed no less than £400 in 1908 for the upkeep of churches and mission. All this has not been carried out without sacrifice of health and even life by many of the workers. The story of this Mission is a story of self-sacrifice.

In this connection we must mention the Stevenson Road. Being much impressed by Livingstone's report that the Zambesi and Shire rivers, and Lake Nyasa, formed a natural waterway leading to Tanganyika and into the heart of Africa, the late Dr. Stevenson, of Largs, urged the making of a road between the two great lakes, and for this purpose gave £4000. In 1879 Mr. James Stewart, C.E., attached to the Mission, after surveying about eight hundred miles of the coast on the west side of Lake Nyasa, explored the vicinity, and made a remarkable journey to Lake Tanganyika, roughly surveying the great plateau on the way.

He returned home and reported favourably on the scheme, estimating the distance as about two

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hundred and ten miles and the plateau as five thousand feet altitude. He thought the chief difficulty would be got over in the first forty or fifty miles. Dr. Stevenson, being favourably impressed, gave the above sum, and the work was undertaken. After great difficulties the first twenty-six miles were completed, but at the cost of the engineer's life; he died from fever and dysentery on 30th August 1883. A year passed, and another young engineer called McEwan came out from Glasgow to carry on the road. Another seventeen miles were added, then he too fell ill and died. The road, which starts from Karonga, had now reached the plateau, and from here a good native path leads to Lake Tanganyika.

. . . . .

The Dutch Reformed Church has a Mission in Nyasaland and one in North-East Rhodesia.

The London Missionary Society is established in Cape Colony, Bechuanaland, Matabeleland, and the Tanganyika district; among the tribes it influences in the latter district are the Wawembe, some of whom were in our caravan after leaving Mpika, in North-East Rhodesia. This Mission has twenty-seven English missionaries in the four districts, besides two lady missionaries.

The Paris Evangelical Mission, founded in 1885 by the late François Coillard, has a Mission extending from Livingstone, Victoria Falls, about three hundred miles along the Zambesi river to Barotseland.

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The Primitive Methodist Mission Society has stations in North-West and Southern Rhodesia, and has been at work about twenty years.

The Roman Catholic Mission of the White Fathers of Algiers has already been referred to in these pages<sup>1</sup>; it has stations in the Wawembe country and other parts of Central Africa. They were the only missionaries with whom we came into personal contact, although we were given information in regard to others.

. . . . .

Sir Harry Johnston, the author, traveller, and naturalist, a great authority on the black man, has said: "I am quite certain that whatever small race here and there may disappear in out-of-the-way islands, the black race will never be extinguished, and that it has a future before it, possibly equal to the future of the white man." If this be true, the responsibility of leading the black races in the right path lies with the white man. Let us therefore strengthen the hands of those who undertake this great work for future unborn generations, and let us not throw cold water on their praiseworthy efforts.

That there is a prejudice against missionary work one cannot but observe. Many earnest workers themselves are well aware of it. Prejudice dies hard, and people overlook the many shining examples, but make much of a few failures.

It should be remembered when criticising these failures that a great part of Africa to-day owes

<sup>1</sup> See page 60.

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its existence to the strenuous efforts of pioneer missionaries.

The subsequent traders, travellers and officials, have benefited by the devoted labours of those who preceded them.

Hostility is not the word, for that is a thing of the past; but let us say a want of sympathy between officials and missionaries is very evident. This seems a pity, for both have the same aims in view—the amelioration of the black races—only the roads they take are different. Englishmen have been more successful than any other nation in dealing with native races, because they always have such faith and affection for their own particular people. This is seen in officials and missionaries alike, but this should not blind any one to the fact that others have the same good intentions. I think both sides are apt to be somewhat on the defensive. In these days of enlightenment and good government the native is not oppressed. Public opinion is against it; the best relations exist between employer and employed. A man who respects himself will respect others, be they black or white.

One collector told us he was unable to see much of his missionary neighbour because he could not stand running the risk of having to drink tea with a native teacher. The same official loves his people, would doctor or nurse his sick boy, devotes his life to studying native character and custom, but cannot allow himself to be placed on an equality. He knows what familiarity will breed; he must keep up his



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prestige; one white man in authority over thousands of blacks. The missionary is also working for his people without thought of self, but a little broader view of life would be advantageous, and a little more sympathy on both sides might not come amiss.

A lady told me it was most painful to her to hear familiar hymn tunes shouted all Sunday long by native children. At the moment I did not much sympathize, feeling that the children were happy and offering praise after their own fashion. But while these songs of praise were rejoicing the heart of the missionary they were stabbing that of his neighbour. The tunes no doubt stirred up tender memories of home life in far-away England, and this shouting by poor ignorant children with no reverence and little devotional feeling jarred painfully.

These are some of the difficult problems and points of view that one encounters, and give cause for much reflection.

Prejudice against missions springs from two reasons; the first a conviction that the African comes of a subject race, and should be taught, and more or less kept to manual labour. The second is that a "veneer of sanctity" in a native is offensive to the average white man.

In the past injudicious missionaries have sometimes spoiled the native, allowing him to wax fat and lazy, when he becomes disinclined to work and wants to ape the European. Undoubtedly the white man benefits by his labour. But setting this aside, it is good for the black man himself to work; his physical



Victoria Falls: The famous Cănon.

[See p. 244.]



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nature requires the exercise, and he looks to the white man to guide and instruct him, and recognizes his superiority.

As to the "veneer," the native is a child in some ways, and cannot help showing off. He is apt to lose his natural simplicity, and perhaps has not acquired—how could it be expected?—modesty, the civilized equivalent.

There can be no two opinions as to the elevating effect industrial and supervised manual labour have on the native character physically and mentally; but too much book work, except in exceptional cases, will do more harm than good. There are but few openings at present for the educated black man in Central Africa, and if he goes farther afield he competes with the white man in markets already overstocked.

We will put aside the religious question in regard to missions; from that aspect there can be no argument. Let us look at the worldly point of view. To any one with an open mind it must appear that we incur heavy responsibility if we give the African native no uplifting, and still go on penetrating into his country. The march of civilization cannot be stayed; in a few years' time there will not be any portion of the Dark Continent unexplored. The inhabitants will come into contact with every kind of white man; their own savage codes and rules of life will be discarded; something higher and better must take their place.

That a certain amount of education is necessary before natives are fitted to understand the Gospel

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and simple Bible stories is no doubt true; but to expect them to assimilate the education (standards) the same as English children—the one with centuries of superstition, savagedom, and ignorance behind them, and the other with centuries of civilization—appears to be unwise. From the reports, I fancy some of the local teachers have also their doubts as to the wisdom of this course, and they are better judges of native capabilities than those at home unacquainted with black men.

It has taken us centuries to arrive at our present level of civilization. Can it be expected that black men can jump over the intervening centuries and arrive in one generation at the point we have reached? Black men have undoubtedly skipped many generations in industrial work, reaping the benefit of the past experience of Europeans, but can this be expected in regard to moral character and intellectual attainments? I think some good and wise man well conversant with native life and character should lay down broad lines for the guidance of those who have to educate the natives, and that these should be followed as a general rule.

In a recent report of the Native Commissioner for Southern Rhodesia comment is offered on the rapid strides natives are making from barbarism to civilization, and stress is laid on the importance of a forward policy combined with *prudence and moderation*. In addition, the Commissioner recommends State supervision and making it compulsory or all native schools, "irrespective of denomination, to include industrial training in their curriculum."

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Exceptional cases will arise when a native has special gifts for a "call," and these men should be helped to carry the gospel of peace to their fellow-black; but they are bound to be exceptions.

The African at the present day is neither mentally nor morally on a par with the average white man, and in his native state he is well aware of this; but a spurious education destroys his simple nature, and in some cases he degenerates offensively in his manners. As it is absolutely necessary for discipline to be maintained, I think it should be impressed on all native scholars that they must show respect for a white man, especially for one in authority. If this was always carried out, much of the prejudice against educating the black man would cease.

Let us not be in too great a hurry to over-civilize. After all, civilization has its drawbacks, just as wild life has its charms; or why do so many fly from civilization to a "simple" life? Is it not from a desire to escape trammels that have become irksome, and to live nearer Nature and Nature's God.

THE END.



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## PRONUNCIATIONS.

In order to facilitate the pronouncing of native names it should be remembered that all vowels are annunciated. The "a" at the end is hard, the "e" terminating a word is pronounced as "ey"; the "i" in the middle is soft, "m" or "n" before a consonant is pronounced like the letter of the alphabet.

### EXAMPLES

Chinde pronounced "Chindey"  
Chitambo pronounced "Cheetambo," with a soft "a"  
Kasanka, first and last "a" hard, the middle "a" soft.  
Lukulu pronounced "Lookooloo"  
Malamas, all "a's" hard, etc.

### NOTE TO P 154.

#### THE TSETSE FLY.

The habitat of the tsetse fly is most difficult to investigate. he is here, there, and everywhere, but generally first makes known his presence by biting the investigator, and takes wing before he can be captured. The introduction of a larger insect, or some bird that would prey upon him, would be one means of getting quit of this pest if it was possible to find the right sort, one that could live in the same environment.

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